

THE NATION

AND ATHENÆUM

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SATURDAY, JULY 20th, 1929.

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JULY 20th 1929

HOW MUCH TAXATION ?

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CAIETY. Tues. & Fri., 2.30.	"LOVE LIES."	ST. JAMES'S. Wed. & Sat., 2.40.	"CAPRICE."
CARRICK. Mon., Wed., Thurs., 2.30.	"THE STRANGER WITHIN."	SHAFTESBURY. Thurs., Sat., 2.30.	"PERSONS UNKNOWN."
HIPPODROME. Wed., Thurs. & Sat. 2.30.	"MR. CINDERS."	STRAND. Wed. & Sat., at 2.30.	"BEAUTY."
HIS MAJESTY'S. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.	BITTER SWEET.	VAUDEVILLE. Mon. & Thurs., 2.30.	THE CO-OPTIMISTS.
LONDON PAV. Tues. & Thurs., 2.30.	"WAKE UP AND DREAM."	WYNDHAM'S. Wed., Sat., 2.30.	"EXILED."
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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE appointment of Lord Ullswater as Chairman of the Electoral Reform Conference is a welcome guarantee that the subject will be treated with the serious attention it deserves as a major political issue, and that it will not be handled on party lines. It is essential, however, that there shall be no unnecessary delay in getting the Conference to work. Lord Ullswater is reported to have said, "We cannot meet until the autumn," and that is reasonable enough; but the terms of reference and even the constitution of the Conference have still to be announced, and these must be arranged before Parliament rises if a fair start is to be made in September or early October. For the "Speaker's Conference" in 1916 a list of names was drawn up by the Whips of each party, and Lord Ullswater was asked to select his colleagues from these lists. It will be interesting to see whether the same procedure is adopted on this occasion. Liberals are confident that the case for electoral reform is overwhelmingly strong, and they will welcome the fullest and frankest discussion. But they are determined that there shall be no deliberate procrastination with the object of shelving the question. The life of this Parliament is obviously precarious, and unless the Conference can report in the early part of next year we shall be in danger of fighting another General Election on an obsolete electoral system.

The supply of water is running short in various parts of Great Britain, and the situation gives cause for considerable anxiety. The rainfall during the first six months of this year has been less than half the average amount, and the available statistics are said to indicate a probability that unusually dry weather will continue for the next few years. Without looking too far ahead, it may be said that unless exceptionally heavy rains occur during the next few weeks the position will be serious, especially in the North of England. The Ministry of Health has issued a memorandum to local authorities urging that there should be no delay in taking measures for conserving existing water supplies wherever a shortage is threatened. It may, however, be necessary for the Ministry itself to take the matter in hand, and to ask Parliament for powers to deal drastically with a complication of vested interests. Broadly speaking, it is probable that there is sufficient water in nearly all localities to supply the real needs of the population; but many riparian owners have statutory rights to "compensation" water, originally required for water-wheels, but much in excess of their present needs, and these rights may have to be abrogated. We hope that the Government will not hesitate to take such powers as may be required before the position becomes critical.

* * *

Apart, however, from emergency measures, it is time that steps were taken to place the national water-

supply on a more satisfactory basis. The Ministry of Health has pointed out that many deep-seated water supplies, which have not yet shown any effect from the drought, may suffer later, perhaps long after surface supplies have been replenished. New supplies cannot be improvised at short notice, and in some parts of the country new supplies cannot be obtained at all without the consent of the authorities in a neighbouring area, who may have all sorts of reasons for obstruction. The whole system or lack of system by which we leave each town to arrange for its own water, with the result that town A may acquire a distant source of supply which geographical considerations indicate as the appropriate source for town B, is obsolete, and ought to be replaced by a system organized on national lines. The problem is ripe for action, for the work of survey essential to a national system has been done. We suggest, therefore, that the organization of water-supply might be a very useful item in the general policy of national development, and might well receive the early attention of Mr. Thomas and his assistants.

* * *

On Tuesday, a brush between Mr. Thomas and Mr. Lloyd George created a minor Parliamentary sensation. Mr. Lloyd George elicited from Mr. Thomas that he is proposing to take powers to encourage public utility concerns such as railway companies to undertake development work, not merely by guaranteed loans, but by subsidizing them by paying the interest on the capital required for any period up to fifteen years, and that though Parliament would, of course, have to vote the money afterwards, no limit is being placed on the amount to which Parliament might find itself committed in this way. Mr. Thomas retorted that this was in accord with the precedent of the powers conferred on the Lord St. Davids Committee, for which Mr. Lloyd George was responsible; the only difference being that railway companies would be brought within the scope of his new proposals. Mr. Lloyd George, declaring that he could not then examine the question of precedent, replied that if he understood the proposition correctly, he would certainly oppose it when the time came.

* * *

We assume that some more or less satisfactory way will be found of composing this matter. Mr. Lloyd George's protest derived force from Mr. Thomas's insistence on the magnitude of the work that he hoped to set on foot under this particular clause. He suggested that this would be an altogether bigger thing than the power for which he was also asking to guarantee loans up to £25 millions. We are not opposed to the principle of subsidizing railway companies for development work, but the principle is a novel one, and it certainly seems as though Parliament ought to keep some effective control over the arrangements that are made, particularly if these subsidies are to run into very large figures. This point of scale clearly invalidates any parallel with the Lord St. Davids Committee. With every desire to free Mr. Thomas from unnecessary Parliamentary formalities, we think that the powers which he is demanding in this connection are unduly sweeping.

* * *

The position in the cotton trade is developing ominously, so ominously indeed that, though the card of the intervention of the Ministry of Labour has still to be played, a stoppage at the end of the month is now generally regarded as inevitable. The ballot of the employers has resulted in an overwhelming majority for insisting on the demand for lower wages, and the mood on both sides appears to be determined and

uncompromising. It is hard lines on the Labour Government that it should be confronted so early with the prospect of a serious labour dispute for which no sort of responsibility can be laid at its door. But, of course, a stoppage in the cotton trade, though it will prejudice various other industries and will derange a balance of trade which is already none too favourable, will be nothing like so serious a national calamity as a stoppage in the coal-mines. Here, despite the general assumption that there is no need to worry, we can see no light. Mr. MacDonald is reported to have assured his party that the Government will honour the pledge to repeal the Eight Hours Act, which suggests that the possibility of the miners releasing the Government from that pledge has become more remote. No one has ever suggested how trouble can be avoided if the pledge is carried out.

* * *

The latest steps taken by the Chinese Government to stamp out Communism have brought it into something like open conflict with Soviet Russia. As usual the storm centre is Manchuria, where the political situation is rich in occasions of friction. Under Chang Tso-lin the province was semi-independent. His son and successor, Chang Hsueh-liang has acknowledged the authority of Nanking. Japan has immense interests in the South, where she enjoys the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula, and owns the South Manchuria Railway, with its allied enterprises. From Chang-chun northwards, the trunk line, under the name of the Chinese Eastern Railway, is jointly owned and controlled by China and Russia under a treaty of 1924, and connects at Harbin with the direct route to Vladivostock. The Chinese authorities recently raided the Soviet Consulate at Harbin, on suspicion of official complicity in subversive plots. They now declare that the Russians have broken the terms of the railway agreement, and that the telegraph and telephone systems of the Eastern Railway have been used for propaganda purposes. They have accordingly taken over the whole railway organization, and arrested or deported the Russian railway officials, and the officials of the Soviet mercantile fleet, the Soviet trade union, and the Naphtha Syndicate. In reply, the Soviet Government presented, on July 14th, an ultimatum demanding redress within three days, in default of which "other means" of protecting Russian rights would be resorted to.

* * *

The motives of the Chinese Government are being freely canvassed. They may well be mixed. There is nothing inherently improbable in the charge of propaganda, and there seem to be just causes of complaint as to the working of the railway agreement. On the other hand, it is said that the Chinese have long cast covetous eyes on the revenues of the prosperous Eastern Railway, and that their present drastic action has been precipitated by a report that the Russians were contemplating a sale to Japan of their share in the line. Moreover, the Nanking authorities may well be anxious—as is suggested by the precipitate demand for immediate abolition of extra-territoriality—to consolidate their prestige at home by vigorous action in foreign affairs. It is not, perhaps, without significance that, just before this coup in Manchuria, Feng Yu-hsiang and Yen Hsi-shan were "persuaded" to abandon their intention of voluntary exile, and remain in China, to attend personally to the "disbandment" of their armies. Whatever their motives, the Nanking authorities' reply to the Soviet ultimatum suggests that they have counted the cost of their action, for it contains no concession or hint of concession.

Should war break out, the first brunt would fall on Chang Hsueh-liang, who controls 150,000 of the best-trained and best-equipped troops in China. Feng's seasoned veterans would also, presumably, be available—at a price. It is doubtful, however, whether the Soviet Government can afford to undertake a war in a theatre of unhappy memories for all Russians, and involving immensely long lines of communication; the more so as the risk of trouble with Japan has also to be considered. Japan is not immediately concerned in the quarrel; but it is certain that she would not tolerate for a moment a Russian reconquest of Southern Manchuria, and although her interests in the North are less important, she might think it necessary to send troops to protect her nationals at Harbin. The present Japanese Government is very unlikely to intervene prematurely, and the attitude of the Japanese Press is studiously correct. It is suggested, however, that if an actual collision between Russian and Chinese forces becomes probable, Japan, as an interested party, may request an emergency meeting of the Council of the League, under Article XI. of the Covenant, to take steps for conciliation. At present the general belief is that, despite the unyielding attitude of both parties, a settlement will be reached by direct negotiation. The situation is, nevertheless, full of unpleasant possibilities.

* * *

The chorus of protest against the proposed new tariff in the United States is swelling rapidly, both abroad and at home. Communications have been received from no fewer than thirty-eight foreign Governments—including those of Canada and several other Dominions and Colonies, but not of Great Britain—and it is perhaps significant that the Finance Committee of the Senate has decided to make these warnings public. What may, perhaps, have still more effect, is the growing uneasiness of the American consumer, which is being loudly voiced by Senator Borah, who sees in the Tariff Bill the influence of great trusts and mergers, formed "with reference to everything that goes into one's stomach and on to his back," and entirely indifferent to the interests of the people at large. The American Steamship Owners' Association is up in arms against the proposed duty on crude oil fuel, and, more significantly, the Middle West has begun to declare that the concessions to agriculture are delusory, and that the farmer is again being sacrificed to the interests of the industrial Eastern States. Everyone is looking, and looking in vain, for some definite indication of the President's attitude. Till he has spoken, at any rate, interested parties abroad will do well to possess their souls in patience, and to refrain from stiffening the backs of the Senators by wild talk of retaliation.

* * *

The debate in the French Chamber on ratification of the Debt Agreements with the United States and Great Britain still drags on its weary course. Day after day M. Poincaré has endeavoured to convince the Chamber that ratification before August 1st is "inevitable and necessary"; that the creditor countries take their stand simply on the obligation of France to honour her signature, and that it is no use, at this stage, raising the question of the circumstances in which the debts were incurred, or endeavouring to vary the terms of the agreements. Opposition comes from all sources: from those who consider that the sacrifices made by France in the war entitled her to free financial assistance from her Allies; from those who dislike the new Reparations plan, which cannot properly be put into operation until ratification has been accepted; from those who merely desire to embarrass the Government. Yet no party, probably, would care to take the

responsibility of forming a Government if ratification were refused, and the first test of strength—on a motion to adjourn the debate *sine die*, gave M. Poincaré a majority of 65—304 to 239. It is as certain as anything can be in French politics that the agreements will be ratified.

* * *

In a statement made to the Editor of the FRANKFURTER ZEITUNG, Herr Stresemann has avowed his belief that all parties were now agreed on the desirability of immediate evacuation of the Rhineland. He takes note, however, of the recent agitation in the French Press for the establishment of a "Commission of Verification and Conciliation"—really a Commission of Control—and declares emphatically that no German Government could accept any such body. Germany has already agreed to a permanent, one-sided, demilitarization of her Western provinces, and sufficient machinery for ensuring fulfilment of her obligations already exists in the League of Nations and the Franco-German Arbitration Commission provided for in the Locarno Treaty. It may be hoped that no more will be heard of the "Verification" Commission. If the question should be raised at the coming Conference, we hope at least that the British Government will throw its whole weight against this proposal to render the Rhineland sore permanent in a new form.

* * *

The tension between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria is still increasing. Both sides have new complaints of frontier incidents, and Belgrade has made it perfectly clear that it intends to do nothing whatever in reply to the Bulgarian protests, and has no intention of ratifying the Pirot Protocol, which would establish a mixed Commission for the settlement of frontier disputes. A further cause of friction is the Yugoslav proposal to abolish the simultaneous holding of land on both sides of the frontier. The Belgrade authorities claim that this proposal would affect only about 1,000 persons, and insist on its acceptance as a condition precedent to any general settlement. The Bulgarians assert that figures, accepted by the Yugoslav negotiators at Pirot, show that 14,425 Bulgarian subjects own property in the territory ceded to Yugoslavia, and that 7,919 Bulgarians who have become Yugoslav subjects still hold property in Bulgaria. The latest reports are to the effect that the Bulgarian Government has besought the good offices of Great Britain and France to persuade Belgrade to a settlement.

* * *

On Tuesday, the Minister of Health received a deputation from the National Anti-Vaccination League, which asked for the repeal of the Vaccination Acts. On the same day the East London Coroner held an inquest on a girl, aged five, who had died of encephalitis a fortnight after vaccination. The case seems to have been very like a number of others which have occurred recently, giving rise to considerable uneasiness. We observe that Dr. Edward Weston Hurst, pathologist, giving evidence on Tuesday, repeated the statement that the risk of developing the disease is much less if vaccination takes place in infancy. This is not, however, borne out by the figures given by the Minister of Health, which we quoted last week. From these it appeared that out of ten deaths attributed to vaccination this year, four occurred in infancy, and three others in childhood. There is also a conflict as to the mortality rate from vaccination. Dr. Turnbull said that one in every 16,000 persons vaccinated died, while Dr. Hurst said that one in every 50,000 died. The whole thing is, as the East London Coroner observed, "very much in the air."

HOW MUCH TAXATION?

THE outstanding feature of the present Parliament is that the bulk of the criticisms to which the new Government has so far been exposed have come, not from the Conservative or Liberal, but from the Labour benches. In one debate after another, the time of the House of Commons has been largely absorbed by Labour complaints of the inadequacy of the Government's policy. Many of these complaints seem unreasonable even from the standpoint of the political philosophy of the complainants. It is difficult, for example, to see any foundation for Mr. Wheatley's outburst on Monday in the avowedly stop-gap measure which Mr. Arthur Greenwood has introduced in regard to the housing subsidy. Granting, as we for our part grant, that the housing problem calls for a substantial increase in the financial assistance given by the Exchequer, it by no means follows that the best way of giving this increased assistance is to restore the ordinary housing subsidy to the 1924 level. There is much more to be said, in our judgment, for leaving this subsidy where it now is and for supplementing it by a system of rent allowances based on the size of the family, such as Mr. E. D. Simon has proposed. At all events, this is one of several questions which the Government must consider carefully before introducing a new housing scheme; and the object of the present measure is simply to maintain the *status quo* in regard to the subsidy, while the Government are considering what lines their new policy should take. This is an unavoidable and common-sense preliminary which justifies no conclusion whatever as to the policy which the Government will eventually produce.

But while on this and similar matters the impatience of Labour's left wing seems, on the face of it, unreasonable, it is easy to understand what lies behind it. The Left Wingers, and, unless we are mistaken, a considerable number of Labour moderates as well, have committed themselves very prominently to policies, under such headings as "Work or Maintenance" and Widows Pensions, which would entail an immense increase in the national expenditure, and a correspondingly immense increase in the level of taxation. Every day it becomes clearer that on all such matters they are likely to get small satisfaction in the present Parliament. Nor is this merely a matter of the limits imposed on the Labour Government by its minority position. It is clear that the Labour Government shrinks from schemes which would entail a heavy charge upon the Budget, for reasons which have nothing to do with the Parliamentary situation; indeed, it seems probable that it would shrink as much, and perhaps more, if it had an absolute majority behind it. It is their perception of this fact that is the real cause of the indignation of the Clydeside school.

Now here we have a question which is clearly of fundamental importance. What is the extent of the financial cloth according to which the Labour Government must cut its coat? What is the order of magnitude of the addition which it might safely make to our annual expenditure over the next few years? Is it from £20 millions to £40 millions annually; or from £100 millions to £200 millions? There is an immense differ-

ence between the policies that are practicable on the former assumption, and those that are practicable on the latter.

The whole trend of Labour thought and discussion in recent years has been to encourage large and, as we believe, illusory notions upon this subject. Indeed, the cult of illusions as to the potentialities of the taxation of wealth has gone hand in hand in Labour circles with a most welcome tendency towards sense and realism on questions of industrial reconstruction. Take, for example, Mr. G. D. H. Cole. Nothing is more remarkable in his recent book, "The Next Ten Years of British Social and Economic Policy," than the candour and moderation with which the prophet of Guild Socialism now writes about the "socialization" of industry. His policy for the coal industry, which he singles out for special treatment, is little more than the policy of the Samuel Commission and the Liberal "Yellow Book." Nothing could be more sensible than his remarks about the dangers of breaking up vertical combinations, or of attempting prematurely to restore the seven-hour day. But when we turn to his financial proposals, the atmosphere of a madhouse suddenly descends upon us. We find Mr. Cole plumping unhesitatingly for an annual expenditure of £100 millions on family allowances, another £100 millions for a National Labour Corps to provide for the unemployed, and ending up with a total programme of increased expenditure of £250 millions a year. After claiming a set-off of £100 millions in respect of reduced armaments, suspension of the sinking fund, and, if you please, debt conversion, he discusses cheerfully the ways and means of raising the remaining £150 millions by death duties, the taxation of unearned incomes, and a special tax on Stock Exchange transactions. And throughout, it must be remembered, Mr. Cole is professing to be strictly "practical" and to be concentrating on "the most important steps that can be taken within the next few years."

We quote from Mr. Cole, because he has set forth his views so fully, so precisely, and so recently. But the point is that in his general attitude Mr. Cole reflects the drift of orthodox Labour opinion. The notion that it would be prudent and feasible to increase the taxation of large incomes by, at any rate, £100 millions a year is widely entertained. Indeed, it may almost be said to be part of official Labour propaganda. The proposal to raise £85 millions by means of a special sur-tax on unearned incomes in excess of £500, together with an additional £15 million from death duties was put forward, not by the Left Wing, but by the executive of the Labour Party.

The moment, however, that Labour Ministers come into office, they become acutely conscious of the dangers attaching to such a policy. When you are talking at large about the question in a more or less academic atmosphere, it is easy to persuade yourself that there is no great difficulty in taxing the rich to the tune of a hundred millions, or even more. After all, it can be said, the standard-rate of income-tax stood a few years ago at 6s. in the pound, and the skies did not fall. If the standard-rate were put back to 6s., this would yield considerably more than £100 millions. Surely, if this were desirable, it would be practicable. It is not, of

course, desirable to increase the burden on the lower ranges of income. But what is there impracticable in the idea of concentrating the burden on the wealthier individuals by extending the well-tried system of graduation? This would mean, of course, that the very rich would be taxed more heavily than they were when the income-tax stood at 6s., but why not? The taxes imposed upon them have been increased in the past—during the war years at an immensely rapid rate—without any disastrous consequences. Why should any disastrous consequences follow upon a further substantial increase now? What, after all, are the difficulties? That savings may be diminished? Well, we are not really short of savings. That evasion may be stimulated? The Inland Revenue can be trusted to see to that. That people may move abroad to escape taxation? Well, of course, some people do that now, but not on a scale to worry seriously about. Approached in this way, the project of securing a largely increased revenue from the well-to-do can be made to appear easily within the range of immediate practical politics, and the practical objections can be made to appear thin and unconvincing.

But this is by no means a complete account of the matter, as becomes clear directly we contemplate the spectacle of the Labour Government in office and consider the difficulties and dangers by which it is beset. Ministers, it is evident, are extremely anxious to avoid upsetting that impalpable entity which is known as "confidence"; and a moment's consideration will show that they have very good reasons for this anxiety. The exchange position is uncomfortable and precarious. If gold were to flow out on a large scale to New York or to the Continent, if Bank Rate had to be raised, and the supply of credit to be restricted, the result would be to send the unemployment figures up in a few weeks considerably more than Mr. Thomas seems likely to get them down in a whole year. Now nothing would do more to bring about this undesirable sequence of reactions than a general state of apprehension among the business and investing community. If people were to come to feel, no matter how vaguely, that it was better to have your money out of Great Britain, and were to act on this feeling on any considerable scale, the consequences would be felt immediately through the medium of the foreign exchanges. One of the factors in the present exchange weakness is, of course, the actual existence of a tendency towards such a "flight from the pound," and this tendency would be decidedly more formidable if the Labour Government commanded an absolute majority in the House of Commons.

The overwhelming practical objection to a policy of largely increased taxation is that it would entail a serious risk of a really disastrous "flight from the pound." This makes it essential for any responsible Government, especially in present circumstances, to walk warily in the matter of expenditure. We do not mean, of course, for a moment to urge this as an argument against increasing expenditure on a moderate scale for clearly desirable purposes. But we do mean to suggest that the order of magnitude of from £20 to £40 millions, and not that of from £100 to £200 millions represents the scale of the increased expenditure which can prudently be undertaken in the present Parliament. Within these limits it will be possible for the Government to finance the raising of the school-age, an energetic attack on unemployment, a big housing scheme, and an extension of the health services. But, outside these categories, with the possibility of serious labour troubles ahead, Mr. Snowden will be right to be very stiff indeed.

PARLIAMENTARY NOTES

IT is the fate of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in his capacity of *Deus ex machina* to be in continual trouble with his machine. Once he was given a motor-car, and the fact was magnified into a major scandal. Now, like Medea, he has taken to a flying chariot, and that also is made the matter of hissing and reproach. His explanation, if any were needed, was complete; but the Under Secretary who was charged with its delivery took up the matter too bitterly, and like an over-zealous fielder, presented runs by way of overthrow to the other side. The moral is, that the Prime Minister, if he wants a quiet life, should buy a bicycle.

* * *

The Government have had what may be called a mixed week. The Safeguarding Debate went very well for them. Mr. Snowden was in good form, and Captain Wedgwood Benn really brilliant, and they were supported from the Liberal benches by Mr. Runciman in one of those masterly specimens of close reasoning in which he excels. But it was the extraordinary behaviour of Mr. Amery that gave to the Debate a more than formal significance. The Amendment had been cleverly directed to the bad effects upon trade of uncertainty in fiscal policy. Upon this limited issue all shades of Conservative opinion, including even the Free Trade section, might have united. But Mr. Amery chose this occasion to put forward Protection in its most unpalatable form. If there is one thing the Dominions refuse to do, it is to admit our manufactures free of duty, and if there is one thing to which our people will not consent, it is the taxation of their food and raw materials. Mr. Amery's policy involves both. And not content with this, he went out of his way to challenge Mr. Churchill on an issue going far beyond fiscal matters. He repudiated all idea of a united front against Socialism, and declared that the difference between Conservatives and Socialists was only "one of degree." Liberals will hardly quarrel with this assertion, but what does Mr. Baldwin think about it? It may be supposed that he is meditating once again upon the "many-sidedness of Truth."

* * *

The resulting Ministerial majority of 120 must have made Mr. Tom Kennedy rub his hands with joy. But it may be suspected that his content was not of long duration, and that by the end of the week his feelings towards his political family were similar to those of the old woman who lived in a shoe. Miss Margaret Bondfield, first woman Cabinet Minister, produced as her maiden effort a proposal to re-establish the financial solvency of the Insurance Fund with an increased Exchequer grant. Liberals approved and Conservatives had no real objection, and an easy passage might have been predicted. The course of the Debate, however, was far otherwise, and after a while the Official Opposition, with considerable political astuteness, relapsed into amused silence. They realized the truth of the old saying that there is no sense in keeping a dog, and then barking yourself. The Labour back-benchers soon made it clear that they intended to do all the barking that was necessary. Charges of inadequacy, breach of faith, and betrayal of the workers were freely hurled, not across the floor, but from bench to bench. Mr. Buchanan led the charge, and said rather more than all that there was to say. Nothing deterred, speaker after speaker, many of them new to the House, said it all over again in a louder and more important voice.

"The stubborn spearmen still made good
The dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his foeman stood
The instant that he fell."

This martial picture is, however, an undeserved compliment. The general effect was lethal. It was more like listening to a series of children repeating the same recitation for a prize. If there is any prize I award it to Mr. Kirkwood, who blossomed like a flower in the desert. Miss Bondfield looked quite unruffled, but unutterably bored. She is cool and capable, and should do well with her job. Her principal difficulty will lie in the rash charge of "administrative persecution" brought by Mr. Clynes against her predecessor in the last Parliament. That is poetic justice.

* * *

This Debate suggests several serious reflections. In the first place it may well be that Labour Members are in a difficulty over their election pledges. While Liberals were concentrating on plans for providing work, Labour candidates were promising maintenance on a lavish scale. Now they find that their Government cannot deliver the goods, and feel that they must make a demonstration to cover the failure. Secondly, if upon a Government motion to which the Opposition offer no objection Labour members, apart from the content of their speeches, intend to speak in such numbers and at such length, it is difficult to see how progress can be made. Liberals have so far been most considerate in their occupation of time, but, if scenes such as I have described are repeated, it is asking too much to expect them to have more regard for the convenience of the Government than its own supporters.

* * *

Lastly, there must surely be "something rotten in the State of Denmark" when Ministers, upon such a limited issue, and with their seats (in Mr. Bromley's vivid phrase) "hardly yet warmed," find behind them so much obstruction and ill-will.

* * *

"The whirligig of Time brings its revenges." The Liberal Party, taunted so often with its dissensions, can now watch the family quarrels of both its opponents with dispassionate interest. Attendance has been good, speeches excellent, and a genuine spirit of Liberal harmony prevails. We rallied our united strength in defence of Free Trade, and solidly supported our Scottish Members in their bold challenge to both the other parties over the Local Government Act. Mr. Lloyd George has now at his disposal a weapon of fine temper and flexibility.

* * *

Of the speakers, I have already referred to Mr. Runciman. Mr. E. D. Simon spoke with recognized authority on the Housing question, and Sir Robert Hamilton with equal distinction on Colonial Development. Major Lloyd George contributed to the Safeguarding Debate a speech which makes us look forward with all the more eagerness to the first attempt of the third Member of the family. Last, but not least, Mr. Ernest Brown obviously enjoyed getting his teeth into Local Government again.

* * *

In the other Parties, the best speech from the Conservative benches (after that of Mr. Churchill on the Address) was undoubtedly that of the Duchess of Atholl on the Scottish Act. Of the old hands on the Government side, the best were Miss Lawrence and Mr. Wheatley. Susan is likely to prove a dangerous pitfall for the Opposition. Her unassuming demeanour conceals splendid fighting qualities, and unless you know all that there is to know about your subject she will probably know more than you do. And Mr. Wheatley, however much you may disagree with him, is a real master of debate.

* * *

Indeed, the new Labour Members would do well to take either of these two champions as their model. There

is a real difference between the House and the hustings which is more than a matter of atmosphere. It is all very well to tell your constituents that your heart bleeds for them, that you are going to the House to humanize it, and make it more like that Mother of Parliaments, the Kirkdale Borough Council. But, when you have arrived, and foregather with all the other bleeding hearts, then what is wanted is fact and argument, and the reply to the fact and argument of others. Too many are trying to mould themselves on Mr. Kirkwood, and that, with all respect to the Member for Dumbarton, is a mistake. He is no more to be imitated than his illustrious fellow-countryman, Carlyle. A natural volcano is impressive, even though it may be dangerous, but the imitation article is nothing but a splutter and a smell.

ERIMUS.

WOOL AND WATER

WE have probably heard the last—as far at least as its practical consequences are concerned—of the much-discussed White Paper (Cmd. 2327) of February, 1925, which regulated the procedure and terms of inquiry of "safeguarding" committees. The next Conservative Government, if and when that undesired phenomenon materializes, is likely to have something more far-reaching to offer us than the tepid essays in Protection to which Safeguarding has given birth. Labour, on the other hand, is hardly less resolutely opposed to Safeguarding than is the Liberal Party. In that respect, the return of Mr. Snowden to the Exchequer affords, in itself, conclusive evidence of the attitude of the Government.

In a sense, therefore, the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the application for a duty upon certain classes of Woollens and Worsteds (Cmd. 3355) comes stillborn into the world. The labour and expense of parturition, which must have been considerable, have been almost wholly thrown away. The Report, we are told, cost a mere £94 odd to produce. But this sum can hardly include the cost of the "able and devoted" services of the Committee's two highly paid secretaries; of the provision by the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Labour of "valuable statistical data"; of the organization of *ad hoc* associations of producers to press the application for a duty; of the counter-organization of other manufacturers and merchants to resist it; of the briefs with which distinguished counsel and their juniors, on either side, were furnished and of the fees and expenses of thirty-seven expert witnesses. Would it, one wonders, be an exaggeration to suggest that the real cost, falling partly upon public funds, and partly upon the trade itself, of organizing and disposing of an application of this kind lies anywhere between £20,000 and £40,000? Tariff-making is an expensive business, as anyone knows who has seen it in being in countries which have the blessing of Protection, and few would deny that such a document as that now before us—happily abortive though its recommendations be—is a poor return for the expenditure involved.

For in spite of its impressive parade of the apparatus of inquiry, hardly anything emerges from the Report, in regard to the economic position of the Woollen and Worsted trades, that was not common knowledge before. In so far as the findings of the committee rest upon evidence, they would have been just as convincing if the three gentlemen concerned (Sir H. Llewellyn Smith, Mr. G. N. Barnes, and Mr. F. R. Davenport) had lunched together with a couple of representative manufacturers and had issued their Report immediately afterwards. The "valuable statistical

data" to which reference is made are evidently too valuable to be disclosed to the light of day; at any rate they have achieved a minimum of publicity. There are, it is true, two short tables (pp. 8 and 9) which a competent statistician having access to public documents could have prepared in about an hour. To this scanty substratum of fact the long-drawn-out and costly logomachy of the hired advocates and experts appears to have added nothing.

This criticism may perhaps appear somewhat sweeping; but a perusal of the Report itself will show it to be justified. Everything is a matter of guesswork. Thus, the Committee are asked to determine (Question 2) "whether foreign goods of the class . . . to which the application relates are being imported into, and retained for consumption in, the United Kingdom in abnormal quantities." At once they come up against two difficulties. First, there are no statistics available relating to this particular class of goods (fabrics weighing from two to eleven ounces per square yard). Secondly, no one has the least idea what "abnormal" means. After discussing these difficulties at some length, the Committee takes a "pot shot" at its answer. It is "impossible to give an exact figure" (or, indeed, any figure) "as to the relative shares of the home market supplied by British and foreign manufacturers"; but there are grounds for thinking that there is an "abnormal" importation ("in comparison with any previous experience") of women's dress goods. So that is that.

Take, again, Question 3: "whether foreign goods are being sold . . . in the United Kingdom at prices . . . below the prices at which similar goods can be profitably produced in the United Kingdom." There are again, we learn, insuperable obstacles in the way of a definite answer. To begin with, British goods are not undersold by "similar" ones at all, but by cheaper goods of inferior durability, so that a comparison of like with like is not possible. Hence the applicants rely, in evidence, upon the presentation of samples of foreign goods, accompanied by statements of the *estimated* cost of producing similar goods at home. This evidence, though disputed, convinces the Committee that "British manufacturers are not, or at least believe themselves not to be" (italics ours) "in a position to meet the competition of . . . the foreign goods represented by the samples." But, they continue, "how far this belief is justified depends upon the costings on which the comparison of selling prices was founded. . . . The system on which these costings were carried out was the usual system followed in the trade. It is, however, clear . . . that this system . . . does not always yield very precise results, and that in some cases the margin of error may be appreciable." Nevertheless, a "broad conclusion" emerges which, once again, bears at least as close a resemblance to a guess as do imported woollens to those produced in this country.

The final recommendation in favour of a duty, the rate of which "would lie between 10 and 15 per cent. *ad valorem*," is reached as the concluding link in a chain of suppositions of which those quoted are fully representative samples. The uses of the Report, therefore, are primarily negative; it serves a cautionary purpose, and nothing more. It admirably exposes, in the first place, the hollowness of the pseudo-scientific pretensions of the Safeguarder's technique. From this point of view, it deserves the closest study. And in the second place, it emphasizes the absurdity of the view that the justifiability of a protective tariff can be argued from considerations relating solely to the industry which it is sought to protect. This point is raised explicitly in the Report. The Committee was much exercised in mind as to the scope of its terms of reference

(though why, as the Committee was merely the creature of the Board of Trade, it did not apply to the Board for a ruling, is not clear.) It was finally decided that, since "the White Paper includes no question as to the effect likely to be produced on the ultimate consumer by a duty on imports," the scope of the inquiry was "necessarily restricted," and that the last word must properly rest with superior authority. This, in its way, is a sensible conclusion; but the Committee's uneasiness of mind is a pointed commentary upon the disingenuousness of the Safeguarder's methods. The Woollen Report is in some ways the most interesting of its series, and might well have proved to be by far the most important; as things are, however, it is more consoling to reflect that it is also almost certainly the last.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE definite development of a Left Wing Opposition to the Government has come much more quickly than anyone expected. It is now clear that when Mr. Maxton spoke of himself and his followers as a Fourth Party he meant what he said. The Government is to them the Bourgeois Government, and they are bitterly disappointed with it. It is not in the nature of the "Clydesiders"—the term is convenient but not geographically accurate—to make allowances for a Government that must be bourgeois or perish. Their own view of the matter is that they are merely consistent. They were simple enough to believe that Mr. MacDonald and his Ministers would stick to "Labour and the Nation" in office as they were pledged to its policy on the platform. Hence the storm which burst upon Miss Bondfield last week. It is perfectly true, as the Clydesiders say, that the unemployed were assured from a thousand platforms that a Socialist Government would make the "work or maintenance" policy a legislative reality, *i.e.*, grant a steep increase in benefits; easier qualification for benefit; and more generous Poor Law relief. No wonder that the Civil Service orthodoxy of Miss Bondfield caused a back bench revolt, and this is likely to be again and again repeated over unemployment, housing, and any other field of activity in which the Government finds it necessary to feel its way rather than to jump. The most interesting question in Parliamentary affairs at the moment is whether the Government will succeed in restoring "discipline" in the party, or whether they feel secure enough to continue to defy the Maxtons and Wheatleys who are declaring open war upon them. The rebels are in a powerful position, they have logic, consistency, and a great deal of sentiment among the workers on their side, and are not in the least likely tamely to surrender to the customary appeals from above for a united front. What they want is precisely a united front—for Socialism in our time.

* * *

The refusal of Mr. Clynes to offer an asylum in this country to Mr. Trotsky is very disappointing. We had every reason to expect that he would seize the opportunity of showing that there is some difference between a Labour Home Secretary and a "Jix," but while "Jix" is gone, the Home Office officials remain, and their influence is thought to have been decisive. The Foreign Office would not have made much of a point of excluding Trotsky. Party timidity has had something to do with it. The Government is still rather painfully on its best behaviour, and extremely afraid of giving the least handle to the MORNING POST type of Tory, who could not be convinced in any case that there is more than a shade of red between

bourgeois Labour and Communists. "Patriots" of that school do not deal in the fine shades and the nice meanings. The effort to conciliate the Tories is wasted effort, and in the process the Cabinet has offended the Liberals, whose friendship should be of more importance to them, not to speak of Labour members, like Colonel Wedgwood, bred in the Liberal tradition. The action of the Liberals in this matter is inspired by no desire to make mischief, but simply by faithfulness to that old and precious Liberal tradition of offering a refuge in this country to persecuted political refugees, to whatever party they belong. They have, of course, strong Labour support in the House and out of it. If this sort of thing continues, those who have been most indifferent to the fate of the Liberal Party will come round to the view that the country cannot do without it. "Liberalism, whatever its deficiencies, does uphold before the world the thesis that in the government of a State there are certain liberties and magnanimities which a great people will not betray." That is quoted from a great American newspaper. Happy thought! Perhaps Trotsky will find the refuge he is seeking in the United States?

* * *

I was rather disappointed by Mr. Wells's recent performance at the microphone. That instrument has the trick of exaggerating defects of voice and speech: Mr. Wells sounded thin and querulous, as he scolded a naughty and hopeless world. With much that he said every right-minded person must agree; for instance, the case against excessive nationalism has never been put more sharply and effectively. As in so much of Mr. Wells's polemic writing, he was admirable as a destructive critic. All his best work of this kind seems to be done under the impulse of a sort of holy irritation; one seems to visualize an angry little man laying about him in the jungle of our social arrangements with an axe. It is when it comes to building on the ruins that Mr. Wells hides his weakness in bold phrases. The slow intermediate period of reconstruction does not sufficiently detain his leaping mind, and he hurries on across the dialectical wreckage to build a highly attractive but slightly nebulous residence for the ideals of Mankind. On this occasion, the ideal habitation of peace was roughly indicated after the customary orgy of destruction. It is the super-state. It is nothing to Mr. Wells that multitudes of patient workers in the same cause are already digging real foundations for a real building. He has nothing but scorn for them and their efforts. The League of Nations is to him, what it is to any elderly colonel in a military club, "a debating society." It does seem a pity that a writer of Mr. Wells's great authority should be doing his best in this way to spread scepticism about the League. The League is all that we have got to stand between us and the horrors Mr. Wells described with his incomparable vigour: the whole hope, the only hope, of the future lies in making the League a real bulwark against war. The greatest enemy of the League is precisely this headlong intellectual impatience with the tentative and the imperfect, and I do not see how the cause of peace is to be helped by brushing it all aside for the remote and improbable ideal of a super-State.

* * *

No one who is interested in ancient civilizations should fail to visit the exhibition of the antiquities of Ur now at the British Museum. Year by year Mr. Leonard Woolley and his helpers are bringing to light fresh marvels of the great days of Sumerian civilization. There has been nothing quite like it since Layard set to work on the mounds at Nineveh. Compared with what has been discovered at Ur of the Chaldees, Tutankhamen's tomb is a matter of yesterday. It is impossible for the most sluggish imagination not to be stirred by these curious objects found in

the tombs of shadowy kings who flourished some five thousand years ago. One impression left upon the mind of an ordinary writer like myself is the contrast, in that mysterious social order, between the extremes of barbarism and of artistic accomplishment. The excavators explored an amazing "death pit," in which lay the skeletons of eighty women of the harem who had been sacrificed *en masse* on the death of some unknown king. Such a slaughter suggests a level of civilization below that of most savages, and yet these victims were adorned with exquisitely wrought and most elaborate headdresses of gold such as the most skilful of modern goldsmiths could not excel. The richness and strangeness of form of these masterpieces of Sumerian art are something for which one's slight acquaintance with the ancient art of the East finds one unprepared—it is all something *new*, as well as incredibly old. The exhibition contains also the first evidence to reach London of the exciting theory which gives historical reality to the Biblical story of the Flood. Below the royal tombs was found a thick deposit of river-laid clay, and, below that, relics of a more primitive civilization. Here, then, if Mr. Woolley is right, is actual testimony to the flood of Babylonian legend, the original of Noah's deluge. The Sumerian name for Noah was Uta Napishtim, but he was apparently the same person.

* * *

The committee of literary men who select the winner of the Hawthornden prize provided a delightful entertainment by persuading Lord Lonsdale to speak on "The Memoirs of a Foxhunting Man." Lord Lonsdale is, I suppose, the most popular Peer in England, but his popularity is not derived from any association with literature. He is a genial embodiment of the sporting instincts of the people. No great race is complete without this rubicund, elaborately dressed old gentleman, smoking his massive cigar. Gentleman is the word, for Lord Lonsdale is a sportsman who loves animals and uses all his influence to protect them from cruelty. As a literary critic he was a great success, and I hope he will be encouraged, as he humorously suggested, to embark on the career of authorship. A book from him of reminiscences of old sporting days in his own north country would be something worth reading. His best qualification for discussing Mr. Siegfried Sassoon's "Memoirs" was that he is a lover of "Jorrocks." It is a far cry indeed from the rough joviality of Surtees to the refined and delicate transmutation of experience into wistful memory achieved by Mr. Sassoon. At the same time, both Lord Lonsdale's old and his new favourite author describe different aspects of the truth about horses and horsey-men, and it was the truth and not the differences that interested our famous sporting Peer. I doubt whether Mr. Sassoon has obtained from any professional literary critic more discriminating or more convincing praise of his work than was contained in this artless little speech. There are, it may be, subtle shades and intentions in the book of which Lord Lonsdale could make little, but he wisely stuck to what he could appreciate from experience shared with the writer—the pictures of that old untroubled English country life before the war came to shatter it.

* * *

Early this week I attended a performance by the Elizabethan Stage Circle of Chapman's "Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron." Our debt to Mr. Poel for his courageous insistence upon keeping the Elizabethan drama alive upon the stage is very great. I could not, all the same, avoid the thought that the choice of this play—or rather, selections from two plays—was slightly freakish. The Byron plays are epic rather than drama, indeed, Chapman shows a certain doggedness in avoiding most of the dramatic possibilities of the story. In short, I found the piece

not a little dull. The curious absence of action, for which the author is responsible, was emphasized rather unfortunately by the immobility of the actors on the stage. The "tableau platform" used for the performance awkwardly restricted their movements on the few occasions when the author gave an opportunity for the stir of life. It was certainly interesting to see a play which the boldest producer has not dared to tackle since the original performances in 1605; but one was reinforced in the opinion that Chapman's tragedies are best suited for the study, where they can be enjoyed by those who are prepared to plough through a great deal of ponderous dullness for the reward of a few magnificent passages in that "full and heightened style." And how magnificent they are, at those moments when the old poet gets rid of the impediment in his speech and pours out such stuff as the last words in this play:—

"Strike, strike, O strike ; fly, fly, commanding soul,
And on thy wings for this thy body's breath
Bear the eternal victory of death."

This is a lost language.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SLAVERY IN HONG KONG

SIR,—Mrs. Haslewood is, of course, correct in pointing out that the ten thousand or more slaves in Hong Kong will not be set free until registration is undertaken. The astonishing feature of this question is that the Ordinance sanctioned by Mr. Winston Churchill in 1923, and designed to put an end to the system within one year, has apparently never been applied—at least, not in its entirety.

The Ordinance in question is one of four parts. Part III., which is really the pillar of the whole Ordinance so far as administration goes, comprises six Articles, and provides for registration and administrative effort in abolishing the system. It is understood that it is this section which the Government of Hong Kong has never applied. Hence it comes about that the situation in Hong Kong in this matter shows no improvement upon that disclosed whilst Mr. Churchill was Colonial Secretary, and little—if any—improvement upon the time when Lord Kimberley ordered an inquiry, which again was never carried out.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN H. HARRIS.

Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1.

THE SCHOOL AGE

SIR,—In connection with your Editorial comments in your current issue on Mr. Thomas's unsatisfactory statement with regard to the raising of the school-leaving age, it is interesting to refer back to an article contributed by Sir Charles Trevelyan to the DAILY HERALD of April 30th. The article is headed "Labour's Fearless Policy in the Schools," and declares, as the very first point in the Labour educational programme, that "the school-leaving age has got to be raised at once to fifteen."—Yours, &c.,

LEONARD STEIN.

30, Palace Court, London, W.2.

THE HENDON AIR PAGEANT

SIR,—I am writing this letter amidst the sounds of battle issuing from my loud speaker. The Hendon Air Pageant is educating some thousands of young Englishmen in the science of war and stirring their young hearts with its noisy glory. Meanwhile, one wonders what the future holds in store for us as a result of this post-war habit of placing our public amusements in the hands of the military experts.

Mr. H. G. Wells has recently observed that bayonets are gleaming between the olive branches. Most of us will agree with him. Members of the late citizen army that was disbanded in 1919, who have tasted something of the delights of real war, will not be taken in by trumpets, flags, and the demolition of canvas battlements; but those who were children in 1918 are more gullible. We too often forget that

children can be deceived by unrealities masquerading as reality. This seems to have been the opinion of the writer of the following report which appeared in to-day's TIMES:—

"The dress rehearsal yesterday for the Royal Air Force Display was watched, as usual, by ten thousand school children, and in addition to the usual finished exhibitions of the power of modern aircraft in the hands of skilled pilots, they saw, and the public will see to-day, what was easily the best air battle which the ingenuity of the Royal Air Force has yet produced. The fact that fifty aircraft took part was only an indication of the scale of the operations, and it was the narrative told through the loud speakers, partly from machines in the air, which made the whole battle and the sequence of operations so realistic and intelligible to the spectators.

"The British Government was represented as in diplomatic correspondence with a foreign Power in relation to a disputed boundary overseas. The question had been referred to the League of Nations, but the foreign Power, without waiting for the League's report, started aggressive action from one of its seaports. Here the battle centred, and on Hendon aerodrome yesterday was a most elaborate seaport with a troop ship in harbour getting up steam. Waves rippled along the sides of the mole, lorries with supplies ran out on the quay, and when little picket boats came steaming out over the aerodrome carrying their own waves with them a delighted yell from ten thousand juvenile throats told that the realism had had its full reward."

I protest against the whole spirit of the air pageant, as represented in this report, on the following grounds:—

1. The "battle" was not "realistic," because it did not represent reality. It represented what a battle looks like *from a distance*, not what it is in all its cold, stark cruelty and foolishness.

2. By representing a "foreign Power" as refusing to accept the decision of the League it implies disbelief in the League of Nations as an effective instrument of peace, thereby reinforcing an all too popular opinion of the League's uselessness.

3. By representing a "foreign Power" as the guilty party to the dispute it strikes a note of complacency and moral rectitude ill becoming a country whose Government has so far refused to sign the Optional Clause. In such highly hypothetical situations I would suggest that gentlemen, and therefore gentlemanly States, would prefer to place themselves in the wrong. But a "foreign Power" attacking a recalcitrant Great Britain would have been a shocking sight for English children to see!

4. It represents aircraft as primarily weapons of war instead of instruments of peace.

5. It suggests that air defence is sure and effective, whereas the Air Force has itself repeatedly proved this to be untrue. In any case the general effect on the public mind is to create a desire for safety through increased air armament.

6. The supposititious story on which the spectacle is based, and the spectacle itself, serve to perpetuate in the popular mind the idea of war as a necessary evil.

For these reasons it would seem that the Hendon Air Pageant serves no useful or peaceful purpose. It is a spectacular piece of make-believe that can have no possible constructive value in a rational world. In so far as it is a public entertainment it should have no military significance; in so far as it is of military value it should not be a public entertainment. The Air Force cannot need publicity for its exercises any more than the Grand Fleet. Let our airmen, therefore, learn to kill in private, as most self-respecting soldiers do, and they will find their nerve and skill not a whit less proved in a wilderness than in a North London suburb.

If it be maintained that this exhibition of skill by brave pilots is a stimulus to civil aviation, then I would suggest that the programme at Hendon lacks the touch of imaginative genius the public might expect; for I fail to see how civil aviation is benefited by this noisy blowing of sirens, dropping of toy bombs, flying and firing of dummy balloons, and all the other noisy and incendiary operations necessary to the successful storming of a wooden seaport whose shores are washed by a canvas sea. I should have thought that the epics of peaceful aviation, real not faked, the feats of the world's airmen that stir us almost weekly, would be sufficient to command the reverent admiration of all healthy-

minded people. What a magic wave of sympathy and common rejoicing sped between two nations when English sailors rescued Spanish airmen marooned in mid-Atlantic!

On the other hand, if our rulers do wish to show us what war is really like we might reasonably expect an unexpurgated exposition of war in all its stark nastiness, instead of a picture that is all highlights and no shade. I am constrained to believe that Edmund Blunden, in collaboration, perhaps, with H. G. Wells and Erich Maria Remarque would concoct a truer and more effective scenario than the inmates of the War Office. But the spectacle they would produce would scarcely be a fitting sight for ten thousand children to see!—Yours, &c.,

E. B. CASTLE.

Leighton Park School, Reading.
July 13th, 1929.

ELECTORAL REFORM

SIR,—It is possible that the rather complicated variation of the Alternative Vote suggested by Miss F. M. Pugh might make it less unsatisfactory in some cases, but it would do little or nothing to ensure (as P.R. has been proved to do) a House of Commons representing approximately fairly the strength for each party in the country. Any system of voting in a single-member constituency with more than two candidates must be something of a gamble. I observe that the example given in the letter results in the election of the one who polled the fewest first preference votes, which would seldom be the "closest possible reflection of the mind of the constituency."

The objection that P.R. would give "safe seats to well-established members long after they have outgrown their usefulness" is a curious instance of confusion of thought. Under the present system leaders whom no one wishes to exclude permanently from Parliament often lose their seats in the prime of life, e.g., Gladstone, Bright, Balfour, Harcourt, and (nearly) Sir Austen Chamberlain. They are then given "safe seats" which are unassailable except by a party split. Under P.R., on the contrary, with larger constituencies, and two or more candidates of each party, their supporters, by means of their first preference votes, would be able, whenever they wished and without friction, to ensure the election of the younger men and women for whom your correspondent is concerned.

This illustrates one of the greatest advantages of P.R. which is often overlooked. It vastly increases the power of the individual voter by giving him an effective choice, not merely as between parties, but between different candidates of his own party. At present he is tied to the one candidate selected by his political organization whether his opinions on foreign affairs are those of Lord Cushendun or Lord Cecil; whether he is a "Liberal-Conservative" or a "Lib.-Lab.;" or whether he is an evolutionary or a revolutionary Socialist.

Professed adherents of one party are often more fundamentally divided than are others with differing political labels.—Yours, &c.,

W. S. ROWNTREE.

Scarborough.
July 13th, 1929.

THE IRISH FREE STATE AND APPEALS TO HIS MAJESTY'S PRIVY COUNCIL

SIR,—May we direct your attention to the position of litigants who are desirous of appealing to H.M. Privy Council from decisions of the Supreme Court of the Irish Free State.

We are concerned for the Performing Right Society Ltd., the Appellants in an Appeal by Special Leave from the Supreme Court of the Irish Free State to His Majesty's Privy Council, and, briefly stated, the question at issue is whether or not the Imperial Copyright Act of 1911 was in full force and effect in the Irish Free State from the date when the Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland came into force in March, 1922, until the passing by the Irish Free State Parliament of the Industrial and Commercial Property (Protection) Act of 1927, which, *inter alia*, conferred Copyright in the Irish Free State.

Pending the hearing of our clients' appeal, which has

yet to be heard, the Irish Free State has introduced a Bill, entitled the Copyright (Preservation) Bill, 1929, which appears to be designed to declare the law of Copyright, as being, and having been, that which our clients are contending it was in their appeal. But Section 4 of the Bill, if passed in its present form, will place our clients in the position that though they may succeed on their appeal, they will be debarred from enforcing any remedy or relief whether by way of damages, injunction, costs, expenses, or otherwise, whereas should our clients fail in their appeal the respondents will be entitled to recover their costs.

The Committee Stage of the Bill was taken last week, and no doubt you have read the report of same which appeared on page 8 of the TIMES newspaper of the 12th inst., wherein it is reported that Mr. McGilligan, the Free State Minister for External Affairs, stated, *inter alia*, that it was the intention of the Free State Government to get rid of the Royal Prerogative in respect of Privy Council appeals . . . and in the meantime anybody who chose to appeal to the Privy Council would do so at his own risk.

We venture to suggest that if this correctly records the attitude of the Irish Free State towards H.M. Privy Council it raises an important constitutional question, in view of the Proviso to Article 66 of the Constitution—which preserves the right of any person to petition His Majesty for special leave to appeal from the Supreme Court of the Irish Free State to His Majesty in Council.—Yours, &c.,

SYRETT & SONS.

2, John Street, Bedford Row, W.C.1.
July 16th, 1929.

"CRUELTY AND COMMON SENSE"

SIR,—Many readers of G. T. Garratt's article in your issue of July 13th, with its sneer at the agitation against pigeon-shooting at Monte Carlo, which made us "the laughing-stock of the cosmopolitan crowds of the Riviera," will recall that this agitation was carried on very largely in the columns of THE NATION, and that its Editor, H. W. Massingham, was one of the chief agitators.

They will recall, further, that H. W. M. and his NATION invariably fought for the under dog and the tortured rabbit (no less than for the wounded pigeon) whenever and wherever they were to be found. And some will recollect with pride that nothing would have been less likely to deflect THE NATION and its Editor from any course upon which they had embarked than fear of becoming the laughing-stock of a "cosmopolitan crowd."—Yours, &c.,

G. M. CROSS.

34, Clifton Gardens, W.9.
July 13th, 1929.

THE PARITY FORMULA

SIR,—I submit that in the naval discussions with America the emphasis laid on the doctrine of "parity" is not an entirely healthy symptom.

In pre-war days the strength of our Navy was determined at one time by the "two-Power" standard (*i.e.*, France and Russia), later by a formula which provided a certain margin over the growing German Navy. Even then the development of the United States Navy was admittedly not a factor which influenced our own policy. In these days, in default of any potential enemy naval power comparable in strength with our own, what is the sense in measuring our forces against those of the United States? For that is what is involved in a "parity" formula. To say that war with the United States is "unthinkable," or even "impossible," is untrue. But there is a general agreement on both sides of the Atlantic that it is so highly improbable as to be dismissed as a negligible risk.

Sane individuals regulate their conduct on major probabilities. Should not sane nations do likewise? If two friends go for a walk it is neither unthinkable nor impossible that some difference of opinion may lead to a fight. If at the outset the two alleged friends were to engage in a complicated argument as to the relative size and strength of their respective walking-sticks, this would hardly inspire their neighbours with much confidence in the sincerity of their friendship.

If, therefore, we, as a nation, hold *ex animo* that:—

- (a) The risk of war with the United States is negligible;
- (b) If we are both involved in future naval hostilities, there is the highest probability that we shall be on the same side;

why waste time, and possibly temper, over the difficult problem of devising a formula which will enable all the different forms of naval power to be equated?—Yours, &c.,

C. R. V. COUTTS.

25, Moorgate, E.C.2.

THE COST OF BUILDING AND WHOLESALE PRICES

SIR,—It has been frequently stated by Mr. Neville Chamberlain that subsidies govern building prices, and he has made that his excuse for reducing subsidies.

The enormous rise in the cost of building a workman's house under the Addison Act in 1920 is taken as an example, and in the SCOTSMAN to-day it is pointed out that the cost of building a workman's house rose in 1924 after the passing of the Wheatley Act and fell in 1927 after the first reduction of the subsidy.

As the Government, as I think quite rightly, are going to restore the Wheatley subsidy, it becomes a matter of considerable importance to investigate the truth of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's assumption. I have long doubted if the subsidy limited to a certain type of building really influenced prices in so vast a business as building, and the only other explanation is a well-organized ring in the building trade of which there is as far as I am aware no evidence.

It occurred to me therefore to compare the cost of building a "non-parlour" house from 1920 to 1927 inclusive with the rise and fall of the index figure of wholesale prices.

The cost of a non-parlour house is not everywhere the same, but the figures I give are strictly comparative. July of each year is selected, and the wholesale index figure for the same month is multiplied by 3.5 to bring it up to about the same scale for easier comparison:—

Date.	Cost of non-parlour house. £	Wholesale price index figure $\times 3.5$. £
July, 1920	1,120	1,109
July, 1921	1,009	679
July, 1922	558	560
July, 1923	497	548
July, 1924	520	569
July, 1925	505	548
July, 1926	495	521
July, 1927	470	495

On comparing these figures it will be noticed that with the exception of the lag in the drop of prices for building in 1921, which is easily understood as the huge and rapid drop in wholesale prices would not immediately react in building estimates, the price of building varies with the wholesale prices, the rise in 1924 and the fall in 1927 being both accounted for. If these figures are plotted in a diagram the close connection between them becomes more obvious.

These figures should reassure those who have been impressed by Mr. Neville Chamberlain's assertions, and prove again that *post hoc* does not necessarily mean *propter hoc*.—Yours, &c.,

A. P. LAURIE.

RATIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL SERVICE

SIR,—I have perused with gratification the article on Rationalization of Social Service. Your able correspondent asserts that many societies are impeded by absence of money and inadequate staff. This may be true of several whose work and record entitles them to greater support, but I venture to suggest that many have outlived their purpose—a large number overlap—some are quite unnecessary. In this connection, wise direction is more than ever essential as the social service ideal is being more universally accepted. It is also accurate to assume that new organizations could be started, with a great scope for research, also useful labour in a particular field unexplored. What all social workers need is the foundation of an appropriate organ impartially conducted to record, and discuss, schemes for social betterment. After all, sir, whether performed voluntarily or paid, the social servant to the community, who must still precede

the State official and be ever vigilant, should be more worthily recognized. There are men and women capable of good service, possessed of the qualities of leadership, who are ruthlessly set aside because amateurs come in for a brief season with a well-filled purse. Merit should count and not mere material assets. How many societies have on their staffs men advanced in years carrying on because the future would be indeed dark if they perforce had to retire. In the realm of social service, often societies quite out of proportion to their real standing or without consultation with others, influence politicians. A real national opinion must be secured by all sections. In Toc H, the Rover Scouts, Christian Student Movement, to cite only a few, you have the expression of youth yearning to serve, but I doubt whether young Rover mates, and jobmasters have behind them men of sufficient broad experience to conduct a course in civics or social science. Here, again, the clergy are not always too well alive to the work going on. In such a place as Poplar, no council of social service exists, not even the C.O.S.

Mr. Mess has advanced two admirable propositions, first, as to a standard work on Philanthropy; the second, as to summoning a conference. I would add a third, youth should be taught more about the lives of heroes of peace, i.e., Howard, Shaftesbury, Hanway, John Kirk, George Moore, John Pound, Lock, Muller, Josephine Butler, Elizabeth Fry, names honoured by many, and who inspire several, but, I fear, but little known to the younger generation. Finally, sir, a bureau or central clearing house for those who cannot give their services freely but otherwise suitable, ought to be set up. A rich man could well release some capable person to devote his or her energies to national service. Why not a prize to assist deserving social workers to explore philanthropic fields in other lands?—Yours, &c.,

D. HALLIDAY MACARTNEY,
Author of "Boy Welfare."

23, Dartmouth Park Hill, N.W.5.

OLIPHANT'S "PICCADILLY"

Sir,—We have just read "Kappa's" note in your issue of July 13th dealing with Laurence Oliphant's novel "Piccadilly," and supposing that the book is now quite forgotten. In his last sentence "Kappa" suggests that an intelligent publisher might do worse than reprint "Piccadilly," and we hasten to inform "Kappa" that this novel was reprinted, with an introduction by Michael Sadleir, in "Constable's Miscellany," at the price of 3s. 6d. net in November of last year.—Yours, &c.,

CONSTABLE & CO., LTD.

10-12, Orange Street, W.C.2.

July 13th, 1929.

THE DAVIS MEMORIAL FUND

SIR,—The sudden death on June 28th, 1928, of Professor H. W. C. Davis has suggested to a group of his friends that a fund might be formed for a permanent memorial of his work. This memorial should place on record Davis's three-fold claim on the gratitude of his generation, his services to learning, his services to education, and his services to the State during the war, particularly in the War Trade Intelligence Department. A form of subscription is being circulated to his friends and pupils. May I be allowed to point out to those who do not receive this form, that copies of it and further information can be obtained from me at Balliol College, Oxford?—Yours, &c.,

KENNETH BELL,
Hon. Secretary, Davis Memorial Fund.

MOTHERHOOD IN THE DISTRESSED COLLIERY DISTRICTS

SIR,—The attention of the public has been widely called to the bitter distress of motherhood in the depressed colliery districts and the inadequacy of help which permits women on the verge of starvation with large families already and with husbands out of work to become pregnant with children which they not only do not desire, but whose advent they fear. Obviously suitable contraceptive knowledge should be

brought to such women. May we report, therefore, that the two C.B.C. Travelling Clinics, with all the necessary equipment, and staffed by fully qualified midwife nurses, are now touring, one in the northern areas and one in the South Wales coal fields, and are doing a great deal to help poor women.

With further funds more could be done. On behalf of the individual poor mothers and of the race, may we appeal for donations to be sent to the C.B.C. Headquarters, addressed to the Hon. Secretary (or Treasurer) of the Society for Constructive Birth Control and Racial Progress, 108, Whitfield Street, London, W.1.—Yours, &c.,

SIR JAMES BARR, C.B.E., M.D., F.R.S., Ed.
ARNOLD BENNETT, Esq.

THE RT. HON. LORD BUCKMASTER, P.C.
PROFESSOR JULIAN S. HUXLEY, M.A.

SIR W. ARBUTHNOT LANE, Bart., C.B., M.B.
ALDERMAN J. S. PRITCHETT, M.A., Recorder of Lincoln.
SIR ARCHDALE REID, M.B., F.R.S., Ed.

H. V. ROE, Esq.
DR. MARIE CARMICHAEL STOPES, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S., F.G.S.
SIR MONTAGU DE P. WEBB, C.I.E., C.B.E.

BRIGHT YOUNG PEOPLE

A CERTAIN sect among us who are called "the bright young people" have caused a mild disturbance in the country at large and an acute one in a London square by holding what was named with happy alliteration a "bib and bottle party." The popular Press is educating us, as far as it can, in the aims and objects of these bright young people, and it would seem that their art expresses itself in the invention of curious and unusual parties. Theirs is a highly gregarious spirit, and, like the bees and the ants, they are studied to best advantage when they get together. We fancy that they began with "pyjama parties," and, if we hear little of pyjama parties now, it is possibly because those entertainments have become suburban, than which nothing worse can happen either to movements or men. A few days before the "bib and bottle" affair there was a "circus party" at which two much admired Society beauties fell in with the spirit of the occasion so loyally as to appear as a pair of apes. The "bib and bottle" party explains itself. You would go to it, we suppose, in a lace bonnet and smallclothes; you would take your teddy bear; if you were a bold spirit you would take your "pram" and lie in it, or at any rate across it, giving way to tears. And many other things that would be right for such an occasion could be thought of. It is, however, a pity for the rest of us that the bright young people should think so exclusively in terms of parties. If they wrote poetry we might hope to read it; if they painted pictures we might at any rate go to look at them. But from their parties the most of us are necessarily excluded, and must therefore remain dull. It is true that when they adjourn to the garden of a London square a certain amount of edification may be had through the railings. This is what happened when the "bib and bottle party" was given. Its reception on the pavement was, however, on the whole unfavourable. It is said that the chauffeurs eyed it askance. Some of the spectators thought it a good time to start the class war, and they sang "The Red Flag," but as usual there were not enough people who knew the tune to make it "go." A tweenie maid has, however, given a grave and weighty interview on the affair, and the neighbours say that they had wretched nights.

Every age that ever was, has had its bright young people, and ours are not a singular blessing to us. Every night, just now, in a London theatre, Miss Marie Tempest can be heard rebuking youth for thinking itself so important and

wonderful and unique. "As though," she cries, "there had never been young people before." Of course there have been! There were "The Souls." They were probably the immediate predecessors of the present "bright young people." Much has been written about "The Souls," but they are still far from clear to us, and one's general impression is that they were at their best in parlour games which demanded of those who took part in them a rather alarming range of information and reading. On the other hand, they could on occasion put dull care aside, and one seems to have heard or read somewhere that it was a "soul" who ran round Berkeley Square in her night-dress, a feat which seems to have greatly impressed Mr. Gladstone, who was, however, prejudiced in favour of the performer. This was not the only "bright" thing that was done in London in the eighties when the good people were in bed. It is said that Lord Randolph Churchill made a bet as to whether he could run from Big Ben to St. Thomas's Hospital while Big Ben chimed the twelve strokes of midnight. But this was a useful piece of research, and it is a pity that the anecdote does not, so far as we know, go on to say whether he succeeded. And then, long before this, there were the "macaronies" who made a great affectation of being foreign and, for some reason or other, wore two watches. This kind of thing done by some of us always annoys the rest of us. It is indeed part of the fun that it should, and, when the times are serious, the protesting party is not only annoyed but alarmed. The protesting party is reminded of Nero fiddling while Rome burned. It is reminded of Charles II. and his ladies chasing a butterfly all over the furniture while a Dutch admiral with an uncouth name was coming up the Thames. And now a "bib and bottle" party—in Knightsbridge—with things as they are—a Labour Government in—not, indeed, with an independent majority, but still in!

We will, however, let the "bright young people" go. Enough has been said to them. And, indeed, the significance of the affair is not so much in what they did as in what the Press made of it. It was not so much the planting as the watering which caused this seed to grow. Some years ago a man of genius saw that the Press of England, while doing one thing, was leaving undone another by which it would give more pleasure and reap a larger reward. The Press, he saw, lived mainly to teach. If it insisted less on teaching and turned rather to tickling, its prosperity would improve. This theory, put into practice, has added much to popular entertainment, but we pay a price for it, and the price we pay is a wrong perspective. We got this "bib and bottle party" in a wrong perspective. There are still a few daily papers in England which have thought it beneath them. Their readers do not know that it was held. But there are others in which it has assumed the importance of an earthquake or a rising. On the front page of one newspaper it has been made the headstone of the corner; another one thought that four headlines were not doing such a piece of news too proud. We might well be uneasy, thinking that so many of our fellow citizens should be continually led like this into mistaking gnats for camels. But things in this world have a way of bringing their own compensation and corrective. The newspaper which applies the irritant on one day never fails with the counter-irritant on the next. It forgets yesterday's comet in the arrival to-day of another one, still more portentous and alarming. We do not doubt that a protective film is growing over modern eyes, and that fear, misgiving, and anxiety batter in vain on surfaces which have been mercifully rendered numb.

W. H. M.

THE PROPOSED NATIONAL THEATRE

THE artist appeals to the State where the private individual appeals to an "act of God." Perhaps the State may help. Perhaps I may draw the winning horse in the Calcutta Sweep or be left a million pounds by a forgotten uncle at Ballarat. Thus relieved of financial stress the artist and the private person will show the real stuff of which they are made; possessed of power for the first time in their lives, they will be able to leave the world better than they found it.

The theatre, that poor relation of the arts, is obviously in special need of "safeguarding." She has to work under economic stress of the cruellest nature. To exist, she must appeal to a larger public than anyone else, and she has no money to do it with. She cannot be blamed if she looks rather dowdy among her sister muses. Give her a lot of money, and she will repay it a thousand times over. All the things you cannot have now, you shall have in exchange for a Treasury draft—wonderful programmes, marvellous productions, the triumphs of youth along with all the glories of the past, in a State-aided theatre, uncommercial, adventurous, and gloriously endowed with prestige.

Further, the moment has come for founding such an institution. A new Prime Minister, at the head of a Socialist administration, is for the first time in effective power. He is also far more aesthetically sensitive than his immediate predecessors, and anxious, so those nearest him assert, "to do something for the arts." He may not be able to nationalize the mines; so cannot he nationalize a theatre instead?

The look of the thing is certainly attractive. Nevertheless it is much to be hoped that the Prime Minister will do nothing of the kind. The step proposed would be one of the greatest gravity, and likely to have results exactly the opposite to those desired. Fortunately, those of us who oppose the scheme, have a certain amount of experience on our side. We have the example of France, where official taste is no more degraded than it is with us.

We have the Royal Academy, our public buildings and our public monuments, which are in nine cases out of ten a mere waste of public money. We know, too, of the public rage that greets any statue slightly less vulgar than the mass. If the Prime Minister wishes to assist the arts, he might do so by giving a pledge that no statues shall be put up during his tenure of office. Such a provision would, I think, go far to prolong that tenure.

We know also of the unintelligent way in which our public galleries are run, of the large sums that are wasted in the unwise purchase of very expensive pictures, and we know that almost the only good modern pictures in the Tate Gallery are there as the result of private munificence. We can contrast very unfavourably the State control of the arts in England with State control in Germany. And we can be pretty sure that it will get no better for being increased. German officialdom is, for some strange reason, in touch with good taste. English and French officialdom are not, and show no signs of becoming so, though I admit that there is a much better case to be made for endowing the opera than the drama, even under present conditions.

The purposes of a national theatre are twofold:—

1. To keep the Classics perpetually before the public, particularly before the younger generation.
2. To discover and produce the works of rising young authors whose gifts would not commend themselves, at first, to the great public.

The *Comédie française* performs, after a fashion, the first of these functions, and makes scarcely any intelligent effort to perform the second. An English State-aided theatre could perform neither.

A national theatre could not perform this first function owing to the nature of the repertoire, which would disgust any tax-paying paterfamilias. Are we to suppose that what was, a few years ago, only fit for professional debauchees on Sunday evening is now to be acted all day long at the expense of the taxpayer? This is really too much to swallow. A little carefully selected Shakespeare perhaps in Bowdlerized versions. But is it seriously suggested that, while a stiff purity campaign is raging outside, the State is going to finance the plays of Marlowe, Chapman, Ben Jonson, Webster, Ford, Tourneur, Dryden, Congreve, Wycherley, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh? I shall indeed lose my faith in England when I see our schoolgirls arriving with their *tickets roses* for subventioned performances of "Love for Love" and "The Country Wife."

Yet if we are to exclude the authors mentioned above, what have we left? Oliver Goldsmith and the "School for Scandal," "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," and "The Knight of the Burning Pestle." At this distance of time "The Importance of Being Earnest" might be admitted to national favour. "The Cenci," however, I should take to be permanently excluded. We might from time to time tickle our historical sense at a centenary of Bulwer Lytton or Tom Robertson; or indulge a taste for cultivated archaeology at the closet drama of Tennyson and Browning. I doubt if even the more virile genius of Swinburne would often be honoured on the posters. In fact, the support given by the National Theatre to the National Drama would be negligible, nor could the management be blamed for it. One can imagine the cry raised by every prude and "stunter" at the mildest departure from a very strict propriety. "Filth at our National Theatre." "Sex plays financed by the State." We can see the headlines in the Press. And the stuners would, for once, be quite right. Why should they finance something which they highly disapprove of and which flouts the accepted conventions of religious and moral training? The National Theatre would only strengthen weakening taboos.

When we pass from dead to living dramatists, the prospect becomes still more hopeless. We can easily ascertain the debt of modern French writers to the *Comédie française*. In England the situation would be worse. At present good plays are all too rarely written owing to the operations of the Censor. Somebody with something to say will prefer to say it in novel form. Will the National Theatre get round the Censorship? Will there not rather be a particularly stiff Censorship which the National Theatre will have all to itself? A Lord Chamberlain might well let an individualistically produced play pass, which could never be recommended for subventioned production. Mr. Shaw, now that he has won his battle and recanted many of his former heresies, might be at last received into the forgiving arms of the State. What assistance would he have got when he most needed it, when his plays were censored more than once, when he could only get his nose in at private performances? I am already old enough to remember the days when Mr. Galsworthy was thought unpleasantly advanced. At the National Theatre, as at the *Comédie française*, the State will rush only to the support of the victor.

Let us admit the English nineteenth century to have been a failure. There remains the foreign stage. We will pay for Ibsen, Tchekov, and Strindberg. How many performances of these masters is it seriously thought that we shall see upon the stage? It is a mistake to suppose Ibsen is not produced because he is particularly unremunerative. I have not seen very many performances of Ibsen recently, because not very many have been given, but even mediocre performances have been very well supported. Ibsen is not acted, because managers do not care about him, and they will not alter their tastes with their status. Modern foreign writers are likely to fare even worse. It is but a few years

ago that the Censor descended on Pirandello. The modern French and German stage are permanently forbidden us. No State hirelings will break through the ban.

Still, the acting of Shakespeare in Mr. Bowdler's version might be worth considering if there were any reason to suppose it would be properly done. (Incidentally, Shakespeare can be seen all the year round at the Old Vic, and the Government might do worse than provide the comparatively small sum necessary to put Sadler's Wells on its legs.) Unfortunately, the ear is nearly always excoriated by the declamation of the actors. Very few of them seem to have any idea as to how blank verse should be recited. The few actors I have heard (I do not wish to mention names) who seemed to possess real sensibility and feeling for verse have met with but scant encouragement from managers, and their talents are now in all probability permanently lost to the public. I have heard much good recitation by amateurs, at Cambridge and Norwich, very little in London. As far as young actors are taught to recite at all, they are taught all wrong. Is there any reason for hoping that they will be taught better by the Directors of the National Theatre? If a national theatre is started it will presumably be in the main run by those who control the theatre to-day. Honesty compels me to state that I do not know one of them who seems deeply conversant with the best European production or even with the best English painting. It has been my pleasure to see at more or less private performances one décor by Mr. Duncan Grant and one by Mr. MacKnight Kauffer. In each case, when these plays were moved to an ordinary theatre, the décor was lost on the way. Why should the situation be altered for the better by a national theatre?

Let us assume, however, that the National Theatre does get going, that it does act "Edward II." and "Tis Pity She's a Whore," and that the standard is as good as that attained by the *Comédie française*, or, to go a stage lower, as good as that attained by the *Odéon*. We are told then that the prestige of the National Theatre will extend to its repertory, and that the public, growing familiar with the names of our masterpieces, will more gladly welcome performances of the same plays by other companies. This is certainly not the case in France, and I see no reason why it should be so in England. On the contrary, I should say that an "advanced" performance of Shakespeare was more likely to be successful in England to-day than a similar performance of Molière or Racine in France, where the National Theatre has, like a upas tree, exhausted all life round it.

To take a small instance. A few years ago, I was, for purely personal reasons, particularly interested in a performance by the "Atelier" Theatre of Georges Dandin. There was nothing the least jazzy or cubist about the production. It was merely fresh, lively, and up-to-date. Such was not only my opinion (I might have been prejudiced), but that of the few people I knew who saw the play. The howl set up in the Press recalled the Post-impressionist exhibitions in London before the war. There was only one place where Molière could be acted, the *Comédie française*! The theatre was empty, and the play was hastily withdrawn. It is practically impossible for the *Théâtre d'avant-garde* in Paris to act the Classics at all. Even M. Copeau at the height of his reputation found it extremely difficult. Such is the usual result of a national theatre.

It would be, of course, tremendous fun to get hold of that rare bird, the impresario of genius, give him unlimited money, and tell him to rip. It is the fashion nowadays to laugh at Diaghileff, and he may have his drawbacks. Still, he has for a considerable number of years shown enormous sympathies for whatever is most vital in painting and music. He has been almost unique among managers, and his company must collapse with him. I cannot conceive how a committee could ever give *carte blanche* to an impresario like Diaghileff, or how they would replace him after the inevitable and early quarrel. He would not be a dictator, even during his brief reign. State art is necessarily committee art. And committee art spells safety first and uninspired mediocrity.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

THE RUSSIAN BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

"Renard." Music by STRAVINSKY; Scenery by LARIONOW; Choreography by LIFAR.

THE gala nights at Covent Garden prove so exciting that on Mondays every seat is taken, and one understands why. Last Monday we saw Lifar, who is born for the part of the Faun, in Nijinsky's part in Debussy's "L'après Midi d'un Faune," and lovely Tchernicheva, cool and dignified. Then a Piano Concerto by Igor Markevitch, sixteen years of age, eminently self-possessed. His Concerto had a classical foundation with no tricks or imitations and no modern hysterics. But the main novelty of the evening—although it must have been written twelve years ago—was "Renard."

Stravinsky's "Fox" is great fun, with his songs and instruments so gay and biting. He simply cannot keep quiet, blossoms at every bar, and makes the public jolt in their chairs and frolic with good spirits. The choreography of Lifar (his first venture) entered into the mood of the music and the décor, with grotesque antics running in parallel. There was just enough action for one not to feel gaps. The plan was to duplicate the dancers with real acrobats—a dancer and an acrobat each for the cock, the goat and the cat, whom one could not distinguish in their masks, so that they seemed incredibly versatile, until at the end all appeared together. Leon Woizikovsky as the Fox was magnificent. What a virulence externally developed, what electricity in his muscles when they projected a movement! The success of the Fox was spontaneous. The public decidedly liked it. And to end up with, after such temperamental agility, "The Gods go a-begging" was a relief well chosen.

We have now seen all the fresh productions of this season. What a wonderful man is M. Diaghileff! When I see the old Buddha (or is he Catherine the Great?) sitting in his box with his face as impassive as his shirt, I know that the springs of action are there—at least as much as in the muscles of the artistes or the conductor's beat. We leave him, return to him, abuse him, court him, grow old or pretend to be young; but he goes on for ever, providing an atmosphere for new and youthful talents—almost for the babies last Monday—drawing out of the air the finances for it, and forcing by an annual miracle on the fashionable public, which can be quite a porcupine if it likes, the best ensemble which the contemporary painters, musicians, and choreographers can put together.

LYDIA LOPOKOVA.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Co-optimists.

M. DAVY BURNABY presides over the Co-optimists—at the Vaudeville Theatre—much as the moon presides among planets. The planets are very much in earnest about being planets—you should see Mr. Melville Gideon distilling the last drop of tone out of a piano; you should see how Miss Phyllis Monkman shines. But among them all there floats this moon. It is large; it is, if we might say so, round and waxy and its face is very humorously puckered up. So is Mr. Burnaby's. He is one of the more comfortable comedians on the stage. There is between most actors and their audiences a gulf fixed. But Mr. Burnaby will have none of this division. His world is our world and ours, his. The other day when a matinée was being given and all the performers were appearing by kind permission of this, that, and the other impresario, Mr. Burnaby appeared "by kind permission of Mrs. Burnaby," and when all the company leaves him on the stage to sing the next verse alone, he follows their retreat with a glance in which envy and disapproval are nicely mixed, opining that they have "all gone off to have one." It is this kind of thing which makes so many people cling to the Co-optimists. You feel, as the evening goes

on, that you are really one of the Co-optimists yourself, or might have been if only you had gone on with those music-lessons which your parents provided and you spurned. For the Co-optimists are all of them, or nearly all of them, endowed with a great variety of parlour tricks. Keeping an eye on one you will see him or her dancing one minute, singing another, pulling very amusing faces at yet another, and then taking a turn at the piano to accompany a song. One wishes the Company would be just a little more restful and sing us some simple part song, perhaps once in the evening. Perhaps they would think "Oh who will o'er the downs" beneath them, but it would electrify the audience.

"Homecoming," Regal Cinema.

"Homecoming" is a German silent film made by Erich Pommer for the firm of "Ufa," and derived from the novel "Karl and Anna." It tells the story of two German prisoners of war in Siberia, Richard and Karl; how Richard talked so much to Karl of his devoted wife Anna and their home in Germany, and of every detail of their life, that Karl came to feel that he knew Anna as an intimate friend. Richard and Karl try to escape together: Richard, dying of thirst and exhaustion in the Siberian desert, is recaptured while Karl has gone off to search for water, and Karl arrives alone in Germany. Going straight to Richard's home he makes the acquaintance of Anna and surprises her by his intimate knowledge of the house and of her and her ways, and finally they settle down together as husband and wife. When Richard returns, he at first wishes to kill Karl, then seeing that he has been completely supplanted by him in Anna's affections, he leaves them together and goes off to sea, in spite of Karl's remorse and entreaties. The slow *tempo* and unhurried climaxes of the film are characteristic of Herr Pommer's productions; the dramatic points are led up to by slow degrees, but unflaggingly, and the proportions of the film are excellent.

Mr. Edward Marsh's Collection of Modern English Paintings.

Mr. Edward Marsh opened his collection of modern English pictures for public exhibition on Wednesday and Thursday of last week at 5, Raymond's Buildings, Gray's Inn, in aid of the Y.W.C.A. Mr. Marsh's collection, which covers every available inch of wall-space in his flat, must be unrivaled as a representative survey of the developments of modern painting in this country during recent years. His taste is both catholic and discriminating, so that there is hardly an artist of the "modern" school who is not represented in the collection—represented, moreover, by a good specimen of his work. Mr. Sickert's "New Bedford" is one of the finest examples of his paintings of theatre interiors; Mr. Augustus John and Mr. Dobson are represented by drawings. It is interesting to see Mr. Duncan Grant's beautiful "Dancers," one of the best paintings of the period of the "Lemon-Gatherers" in the Tate Gallery, and there are also two or three flower-paintings and still-life paintings here. Mr. Marsh evidently has a particular interest in the work of Mr. Cedric Morris; he possesses a very good landscape, a flower piece, and two of his pictures of birds. Other artists represented are Messrs. Frederick Porter, Keith Baynes, William Roberts, Monnington, and Edward Wadsworth, and among the younger contemporary painters Mr. Edward Wolfe, Mr. John Banting, Mr. Douglas Davidson, and Mr. Pitchforth. Mr. Marsh's collection also contains several paintings and drawings by English masters such as Gainsborough, Romney, Hogarth, and Richard Wilson.

Contemporary French Art, Leicester Galleries.

The names of Picasso, Utrillo, Matisse, Vuillard, Derain, Friesz, Dufy, Chirico, and others in the catalogue lead one to expect, perhaps, a higher general standard of excellence than one finds in this exhibition at the Leicester Galleries. These painters are, it is true, all represented here, but in general the pictures they show are by no means of the best of their work. There are one or two exceptions: Friesz has seldom painted a better picture than "La Sieste," a large canvas of a garden scene with figures; Derain's "Petite Tête de Femme" and "Paysage du Midi" are good, if not important, paintings; Vuillard's

"Tête de Femme," Utrillo's "Vaujours, rue de Meaux," Chirico's "Composition," and Dufy's "Paysage" are all interesting and worthy of respect. But these form only a very small part of an exhibition which consists of about a hundred and twenty paintings and drawings, of which the majority are on much the same level of mediocrity and emptiness of idea as a corresponding exhibition of contemporary English painting would produce. The standard of technical competence is higher among French painters, and as there are more first-rate painters in Paris than in London, so there are more styles for the second-rate to imitate, which lends greater variety. But of originality and real talent, apart from the painters already mentioned, there is not very much evidence in this exhibition.

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Things to see and hear in the coming week:—
Sunday, July 21st.—

Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe, on "The Springs of Social Action," South Place, 11.
Dr. Walter Walsh, on "Edward Carpenter and his Message to his Generation," Lindsey Hall, 11.

Monday, July 22nd.—

Strindberg's "The Father," at the Everyman.
Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., on "The New Parliament and the Women's Movement," at a Garden Meeting at Pembroke Lodge, Pembroke Gardens, W.8, 3.
Discussion between Mr. Compton Mackenzie and Mr. Beverley Nichols, the Wireless, 9.20.

Tuesday, July 23rd.—

"Tess of the D'Urbervilles," by Thomas Hardy, at the Duke of York's.

Wednesday, July 24th.—

Mr. G. M. Gillett, on "British Overseas Trade," the Wireless, 7.

Thursday, July 25th.—

League of Nations Union, Oxford Summer School, New College (July 25th-31st).

OMICRON.

JULY

DARK-TRESSED above her gipsy tan,
Adown the road comes gay July.
To pitch her Rainbow Caravan,
Where June's red roses dropped to die.
She stretches forth her hand to span
The sunbeams slanting from the sky
Then peeps as through a slatted fan
as June bids all her loves good-bye.

Then flushes, and folds up her fan,
And sweeps her bangled arm on high.
Then from her rain-splashed Caravan
Sees all the Thunder Hosts go by.
And laughs, this fickle Charlataan,
To see her red-forked lightnings ply
Past Neptune, and Aldebaran,
to unmapped spaces of the sky.

A minaret, in Hindustan,
Cracked in the twinkling of an eye.
As o'er the desert pale Dian,
Saw Dawn's red couriers eastward fly.
The scarlet shafts that marked their van,
Streaked down the dark, to where July
Dark-tressed, above her gipsy-tan,
Saw all her dagged lightnings die.

Far easternward of East Japan,
Adown the Dawn to gay July,
The golden sunbeams slanting ran
Through empty blue of summer sky.
She smiled, and opened out her fan.
And stretched her bangled arm on high,
And winked at dim Aldebaran,
As man and maid went linking by.

W. BRADLEY.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

HOW NOT TO READ POETRY

IT is a long time since I have read such an interesting book on literature and criticism as "Practical Criticism," by I. A. Richards, which has a subtitle, "A Study of Literary Judgment" (Kegan Paul, 12s. 6d.). It has those qualities—among others, intelligence and humour—which have made Mr. Richards a power with the literary intellectual young of Cambridge, but its whole scheme is so original and it touches life and letters at so many different points that even the elderly, who suffer from that almost universal malady of middle—and old—age, mental sclerosis, may find that a reading of it causes some slight and sluggish movement of thought in the mind. The only review of it which I have read, it must be confessed, seems to belie the hope or possibility in the last sentence, for the reviewer—a gentleman in the prime of middle age—completely missed the significance of the facts produced by Mr. Richards and ignored the arguments which he bases on them.

* * *

Unlike most writers on literary criticism or judgment, Mr. Richards starts from facts, and his facts are a very queer and interesting collection. He is a lecturer at Cambridge, and it has been his practice for some years to send round "printed sheets of poems—ranging in character from a poem by Shakespeare to a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox—to audiences who were requested to comment freely in writing upon them. The authorship of the poems was not revealed, and with rare exceptions it was not recognized." The first half of his book gives in great detail the comments, thus collected, upon thirteen poems, the latter half analyzes the results. One's first feeling on reading these comments is bewilderment and horror, and one's first instinct is to say, with the reviewer referred to above, that the writers are so imbecile that Mr. Richards must have accidentally given his poems to a collection of the pathologically feeble-minded, and therefore it is absurd to attempt to draw conclusions from his data. It is true that the writers seem to be inconceivably stupid. Over and over again they show themselves quite unable to understand the meaning of a poem, and it does not make much difference to them what the poem is; they misunderstand Longfellow as easily as they do Donne, and "Woodbine Willie" as infallibly as Gerard Manley Hopkins. Their failure to understand is universal and particular, deep and superficial; they misunderstand the meaning of a poem in all the four senses given to that word by Mr. Richards; they make nonsense of the sense of the words, they distort the feeling, mistake the author's tone, and do not see what his intention is. If Christina Rossetti writes "a cool, green house," they think she is writing about greenhouses; they think that a poem of Donne's "expresses the simple faith of a very simple man"; one writes of Hardy's poem on George Meredith, "I dislike it for its stilted and high-flung style, and feel that the author might have come down from his high-horse for just a moment in speaking of his departed friend"; while many of them think that Mr. Noyes's poem on George Meredith is a patriotic poem in praise of the King.

* * *

Of course, if by some unfortunate accident Mr. Richards has sent the poems to an audience of which 99 per

cent. are half-wits, an examination of the results is a waste of time. His audience, I understand, is mainly composed of undergraduates reading for honours in the English Tripos and a fair proportion of them obtain an honours degree. A Cambridge Lecturer in English tells me that the less intelligent among the undergraduates who read for honours tend to take the English Tripos (his actual words were stronger and ruder), but I cannot believe that there can be a correlation between congenital idiocy and taking the English Tripos at Cambridge. Mr. Richards does not think there is, and it is obvious that without any other evidence it is fair to assume that those who criticized these poems are above rather than below the average in intelligence, and certainly have had more experience of reading poetry and "literature" generally than the average man.

* * *

The great interest of Mr. Richards's book is that, assuming his pupils to possess a normal amount of wits, he shows that their amazing use of them throws important light upon literature and the reading and judging of it, and still more upon education. I have not space here to do anything but touch the fringe of one or two of the topics discussed by him. His book shows certainly how it is that so many people find great artistic merits in the most shoddy and meretricious of bad writers, and are absolutely blind to the merits of good or great writers. Most people, in reading poetry, do not give themselves or the poet a chance; they have not even begun to see that it is necessary to try to understand what the poet is trying to do. The man who says that he likes a poem because it is about clouds and clouds "have a fascination for me," and another who says that he dislikes a poem about a king—it is really about George Meredith—because "'King' associates itself in my mind with Tyranny, an impossible subject for poetry," prove very clearly that they are holding their minds in positions and predispositions which make it impossible for them to appreciate any poetry, good or bad. But similar, though not the same, positions and predispositions operate in much more cultivated and less naive people—dare we admit it, even in ourselves?—to over-stimulate appreciation of Y's poetry and blind us to the beauties of Z's. One may suspect that the man who adores Bach and Mozart but hates Wagner, and he who mouths Keats and Shakespeare but can see nothing in Racine and Pope, are a little further on, but still in the same street with those who think that good poetry is about clouds but not about kings. And is not that feeling of hostile irritation at running up against a blank unintelligible wall, which we have all felt some time or other on first reading a new poet twanging a strange lyre in an unaccustomed way, due more often than not to a similar inability to get our minds into a condition in which they can begin to understand what this particular poet is trying to do? We may have got to the stage of seeing that a good or a bad poem may be written about clouds or kings, but we have not got to the stage of seeing that here is someone not writing about either clouds or kings or anything previously written about by poets and yet writing poetry.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

MRS. GASKELL

Mrs. Gaskell, her Life and Work. By A. STANTON WHITFIELD. (Routledge. 7s. 6d.)

I WAS grateful to Mr. Whitfield's life of Mrs. Gaskell, if only because it sent me back to renew acquaintance with "Cranford" where the china was delicate egg-shell, the old-fashioned silver highly polished, and the eatables of the slightest description; where some might be poor, but all were aristocratic; and where Miss Betsy Barker's Alderney cow went out to pasture, clad in dark grey flannel. This gentle, rambling book is only too apt to share the fate of classics, which everybody knows and nobody reads. Mrs. Gaskell herself appears to have been a woman of great charm, intelligence, and sensibility; the author of "Mary Barton," and the friend of Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Lord Houghton, and Madame Möhl, could scarcely have been otherwise, nor does Mrs. Carlyle's somewhat tart remark seem to tally with other descriptions that have been left of her. "Mrs. Gaskell took Geraldine (Jewsbury) and me a beautiful drive the other day in a friend's carriage. She is a very kind cheery woman in her own home, but there is an atmosphere of moral dullness about her, as all Socinian women." This accusation of "moral dullness" seems incongruous as applied to a woman who was welcome in the most distinguished company, and whose beauty and humour made an impression on all who met her. Moreover, Mrs. Gaskell, though physically not strong, was an active traveller, whose letters reveal the interest she took in sights and people as she made her way about the Continent.

Mr. Whitfield has a proper appreciation of his heroine, though his book is marred by an unfortunate style which is sometimes arch (as when he writes of "a malevolent gentleman named Pope"), and sometimes sentimental. Thus, he comments on "Cranford": "An old-time fragrance emanates from the memory of it; an old-world flavour of lavender, rosemary, and sweet basil mingled with kind and gentle personalities"; and again: "How sweet and fragrant! They (her writings) are like a nosegay of violets, honeysuckle, lavender, mignonette, and sweet briar." After this, we are not surprised to come upon the opinion that "all good novels are sentimental." Occasionally, too, Mr. Whitfield falls into actual inaccuracies, as when he observes that the name Astrea was bestowed on Aphra Behn by Pope, and says that Mrs. Behn published "Oroonoko" in 1698. Both these statements are incorrect. The name Astrea was bestowed by Mrs. Behn upon herself in the course of a political correspondence; and "Oroonoko" was published in 1688, Mrs. Behn dying in the following year. These are small points, no doubt, and are irrelevant to Mrs. Gaskell, but they have the unlucky effect of making one mistrust the author who is responsible for them. On the other hand, though Mr. Whitfield's critical judgment is often erratic, I think one must agree that his estimate of "The Life of Charlotte Brontë" is fair and impartial. He recognizes its faults and its prejudices, but at the same time claims for it that it is "one of the best literary biographies in our language." The word literary justifies the phrase. Many accusations have been brought against Mrs. Gaskell as a biographer, but, although the justice of these accusations must be accepted, some extenuation may be pleaded if we remember, first, that the life and personalities of the Brontës were so ordained as to constitute almost a ready-made novel, and, secondly, that the biographer was herself a novelist. Indeed, one might well forgive Mrs. Gaskell if her book wore an even greater appearance of fiction than it does. I doubt whether Mrs. Gaskell was hampered so much by her personal friendship for Charlotte Brontë as by her own gifts of creative imagination; it is perhaps inevitable that biography written by a novelist should be to a certain extent literary rather than "pure." If this be true, it may be urged that novelists should not attempt biography. But possibly novelists may sometimes bring to the art of biography some quality which is lacking in the professional biographer. Mrs. Gaskell, for instance, may have been guilty of a falsification of facts: she was not guilty of a falsification of atmosphere, nor of a misinterpretation of

her central character. She had understood Haworth, and she had understood Charlotte, even if she had inexcusably used Branwell as a foil—as a shadow under Charlotte's light—and even if her mid-Victorian mind had been scandalized by an episode with which she was unable to sympathize and which she was consequently impelled to distort. Over Charlotte, Emily, and Haworth, at least, she did not go wrong, and it is arguable that precisely those qualities of the novelist which inspired the chiaroscuro effect of which Carus Wilson and Branwell were the victims, were also the qualities which best fitted her to be the recorder of that ill-omened family.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST.

THE PROGRESS OF POETRY

Collected Poems. By RICHARD ALDINGTON. (Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

The Wall of Weeping. By EDMOND FLEG. Translated by HUMBERT WOLFE. (Gollancz. £1 10s.)

Earth. By FRANK TOWNSHEND. (Knopf. 6s.)

Wild Garden. By BLISS CARMAN. (Lane. 6s.)

In Quiet Fields. By ROBERT CRAWFORD. (Edinburgh: Porpoise Press. 3s. 6d.)

Some Poems. By RUPERT CROFT-COKE. (Rochester: The Galleon Press. 7s. 6d.)

A Collection of Poems. By ELEANOR FARJEON. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

AMONG the names of contemporary poets, that of Mr. Aldington is not mentioned as often as it should be; perhaps the appearance of his "Collected Poems" will set that right. Though not a voluminous writer, he has produced enough in verse to justify the title and enterprise of this book, which displays him altogether as a gifted annotator of life and a resourceful artist of word and tone. The quality which may have intervened between him and the wider audience that even poetry in 1929 may win is probably his recurrent sense of the injuries and outrages in experience. His disillusion is such that he cannot regard with tolerance the common lot of mankind exhibited in such harmless vices as the City man's starched cuffs and newspaper. His epigram, "To Those Who Played for Safety in Life," concludes with the self-defeating stroke,

"I might have earned ten pounds a week!"

to which the victims' reply would be always, "And good luck to you." But Mr. Aldington's poetry speaks of other and more dominant distresses with strong and subtle feeling. Our purpose being to draw attention to an admirable poetry-book, we may allude especially at the moment to those parts of it recording war experience. While so much of fact or fiction in that field is being read, Mr. Aldington's achievement should not be overlooked. It forms a delicate and moving portrait of the sensitive spirit in the zone of guns and trenches; it reveals with startling clearness the kind of terrors and the kind of fascinations that sprang up there. To transfer lines from his interpretation of "A Village" behind the line, when he has

"pondered
Hour upon hour in those damned trenches,
He gets at the significance of things;
Gets to know, clearer than before,
What a tree means, what a pool,
Or a black wet field in sunlight."

War—the last War—also finds a place in M. Fleg's poetic spectacle, upon which Mr. Wolfe has thrown the light of his artistry; in a note he explains that he has used metres and rhythms with "no relation" to those used by M. Fleg, and that he has here and there abbreviated the text. "It seemed to me, in the English point of view, that the spirit of the original could be more nearly overtaken by subduing some of the high lights." The design of M. Fleg can nevertheless be appreciated in the English refraction of "Le Mur des Pleurs." To this wall comes the Wandering Jew. His countrymen are there, lamenting Jerusalem. The Jew promises them a new and ultimate Temple. They doubt it. While they continue to weep, he sleeps and dreams. The productions of Progress appear to him, interrupted by a battery wire-cutting and bringing down a church steeple. Ancient cities describe themselves; they fade,

while they warn modern Babylons of their doom. The modern cities, ignoring, dance through the dream ; and the stars are troubled. Now the dreamer, struck with fantastic pains, looks on the Great War in symbols. Mountains, rivers, seas, skies, are hurled into a barrage. "The stars maintain their paces but the earth swings from her centre." This storm discloses Antichrist, who, after some deplorable indecencies, is denounced by the dreamer and cursed by the dead. Future generations appear, and the glories to come are being despaired, when the wailings by the wall are heard again, and the dreamer wakes.

If M. Fleg's scheme is extensive, that of Mr. Townshend comes near it. It is presented in simpler and less rhetorical terms. Mr. Townshend criticizes humanity in detail, sometimes adversely, sometimes not ; he then "sees a new Earth," where everybody is happy and free ; he proceeds through a series of philosophical anecdotes and marginalia ; and last he attempts a statement of consciousness, man's purpose, and time. We do not detect any pure poetry in Mr. Townshend's pages, but we welcome his serious thought and observant brevities.

Bliss Carman's last book has no surprises, but the poem "In the Offing" is an elegy of imaginative and expressive certainty, confirming the author's reputation. If we were keeping a register of new poems of spontaneous excellence, we should also take from Mr. Crawford's volume the mystical "At the Eleventh Hour." A heartiness of sympathy or distaste makes Mr. Croft-Cooke's verse with its observation and caprice worthy of the reader's inquiry. And we must point out, however briefly, the claims of Miss Farjeon's "Collection of Poems." This noted children's poet should not be considered only in that character ; her book includes a hundred pages of lyrical verse for everybody. Much has been said of modern nature-poetry ; next time the conversation goes that way, we shall quote Miss Farjeon's contributions to it.

ART IN ANCIENT ROME

Art in Ancient Rome. By EUGENIE STRONG. Ars Una Series. Two vols. (Heinemann. 10s. each.)

THESE volumes belong to a series, and this fact no doubt dictates their form—the size and shape of a guide-book, though necessarily heavier, as a paper was required that would take the illustrations. Of these there are more than 580—mostly very small, two inches by one and a half as a rule, which for the reproduction of paintings or other elaborate works of art is too small to reveal very much ; sometimes it is almost impossible to make out what is represented. But if you are to have 580 illustrations, and a narrative, and pay a pound for the lot, you can hardly expect folio size. In general, the illustrations are clear, and their great number of itself adds to the value of the work. Among them there must necessarily be things familiar enough, but most readers will be apt to remark how much is given to them that is quite unacknowledged. What is more is that the pictures in a sense tell the story of the book themselves, and the reader is impressed at once with the range of art surveyed and with the skill in choice.

But, beside the pictures, Mrs. Strong herself tells the story, and a very vigorous, interesting, and human story it is. Like Antigone in the Greek play—if she will let us stray for a moment with the "Hellenists" whom she so gently quizzes—it is her nature to join not in hate but in sympathy. We are familiar enough with the scorn of the "Hellenists" for things Roman ; Mrs. Strong does not deal in scorn ; she rather likes the Romans after all, whom there are "very few to love," and the result of her sympathy is that Art in Rome grows more and more interesting. It is to be observed that her subject is not Roman art, but a larger one and a wider field. It includes architecture, painting, sculpture, and gems, and, in general, the reaction (as the vulgar now say) of Rome to art, to this and that stimulus, to illumination, to taste, and to fashion.

It is a long story from the arrival of the Etruscans to Diocletian. Of course you may ask when the Etruscans arrived ; and she tells you how Edward Meyer dates it about 1500 B.C., and Furtwangler about 1000 B.C., which gives you a little margin ; and then she adds the remarkable sen-

tence that "modern research seems to show that there is nothing distinctly Etruscan in Etruria before the ninth century B.C., while some authorities put down the period of Etruscan expansion in Central Italy to as late as the seventh or sixth century B.C." She does not tell us where exactly they came from ; it seems that she does not know—which is a relief ; for, at some moments, she is just a little orthodox about their Lydian origin and our old friends the Tarquins and the tiresome Servius, who so long vexed English youth with his arithmetical Constitution. As for the Etruscan buildings in Rome—well, parts of them are excellent, and parts restored, and the dates various ; but anyhow the arch is not found, she says, in Etruria before the fourth century. So perhaps the Romans still keep something of their own.

In one way the Romans were very English ; they were always willing to believe that foreigners really understood Art better than themselves. Etruscan and Greek, as we know, led them ; and they collected from abroad, by various methods, till Rome became and remains "the greatest museum of the world," and copyists drove the most successful trade—all signs of inferiority, you may say, but at least of appreciation. And one may ask whether we are not all of us immensely the gainers from those two habits of collecting and copying.

Mrs. Strong's human sympathies make the book delightful. Look at the charming boys, from paint and marble and bronze, you find on pages 30, 64, 126 of her second volume ; at the ladies (ii, 64, 84), one of whom "seems to claim sisterhood with the great ladies of Gainsborough and Reynolds"—and the other also. Pasiteles again, who would not (like the painters satirized by Polybius) paint from the stuffed beast, goes down to the docks to study the newly arrived lions and out bursts a panther to his no small danger. Or take that amalgamated head—first-century hair, second-century eyes, Luna marble, and made in Alexandria. But there is only space left to the contented reviewer to urge the reader to get and enjoy the book that he has found so full of matter, sense, sympathy, and pleasure.

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LOUIS XIV.

Louis XIV.: in Love and in War. By SISLEY HUDDLESTON. (Cape. 18s.)

THIS book is surely one of the strangest of Louis XIV.'s posthumous misfortunes. A year or two ago we had M. Bertrand's contribution, which excessive hero-worship made tiresome and untrustworthy, but on the whole the tendency lately has been towards an undue disparagement of Louis, who, even less perhaps than other victims, should not be approached by the man with a bee in his bonnet. Mr. Huddleston has the fashionable psycho-analytical bee, but to say this is hardly fair to the science of psycho-analysis, for his knowledge of it seems to be on a par with that of the irritating people, now numerous, who, without the capacity to study the briefest text-book on this or any other subject, talk everywhere about "complexes" and "inhibitions," as if they were new slang words which had tickled their fancy. It is the "inferiority complex" which has tickled Mr. Huddleston. He is like a boy at school who has the answers to the algebra problems printed in the back of his book. These answers, one remembers, could be acquired by paying an extra threepence, but they were never any use—where was the comfort in reading "five and a half days," or "twelve o'clock," when between that result and the problem as stated there must be shown a whole page of working, involving x 's and y 's? Mr. Huddleston is satisfied with shouting the answer and thanking Dr. Adler for leading him to it. Louis XIV., it appears, suffered from this "inferiority complex" as the result of a youth which Mr. Huddleston asserts without producing a scrap of evidence to have been considerably more wretched than is commonly supposed, for instance:—

"He (Louis) knew . . . the relations between his mother and her paramour (Mazarin). . . . He loved, too, his mother, but it was a love overlaid by sorrow, and though Louis was no Prince of Denmark, his boyhood was a moral tragedy."

Add to this the material discomfort and even danger to which the boy was exposed during the Fronde, which Mr. Huddleston, very oddly, seems to think he is the first writer to place as an enormous factor in his later mental development, and you get your "inferiority complex." Once got, it is announced as a settled thing at intervals throughout the book, on the principle of "what I tell you three times is true," with to help it out a little juggling of the facts, as that Louis loved only plain or ugly women, and accounts of the foreign and home policy during the reign which are misleading by reason of what they omit.

There is nothing new in the idea which lies behind Mr. Huddleston's catchword; the amount of truth it contains has always been obvious even in the baldest recital of the main events of Louis XIV.'s life, but the more conscientious historians have preferred to draw their conclusions from known facts such as the early miseries during the Fronde, and Louis's own intellectual mediocrity in a brilliant age, rather than from his unknown reactions to the unknown relationship between his mother and Mazarin. And that Mr. Huddleston regards every outward sign of magnificence as a pathological symptom in Louis merely shows that in his haste to announce the answer he has found in the back of a new book, he has forgotten the first necessity in an historian. He must unfurnish before he refurnishes, he must remove everything that came into Europe with the French Revolution before he can understand the situation of any King in the seventeenth century. Regarded as people with whom one might brush shoulders any morning in the Strand, all are maniacs.

The book contains no index, no bibliography, few references, some inaccurate quotations, and many sweeping assertions on matters which are still and probably always will be darkly obscure; rubbishy melodramatic affairs like the Voisin scandal are recounted with gusto at great length, while the Diet of Ratisbon and the Treaty of Ryswick are dismissed in a sentence or two. This bid for popularity is peculiarly unsuitable in a life of Louis XIV., who never cut a notable figure in either love or war, but who had, we may continue to believe in spite of Mr. Huddleston's severe scoldings on this count, a certain gift for diplomacy. Mr.

Huddleston has the journalist's deftness in hovering between the popular and the vulgar in style, and he makes full use of the full-stop which, in journalism, is the soul of pregnant brevity: "Condé gained the battle of Lens. Mazarin rubbed his hands. The Queen was haughtier than ever"—and so on to the final full-stop before "Finis."

PLACE NAMES

The Place Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire. By A. H. SMITH. (Cambridge University Press. 20s.)

The Chief Elements used in English Place Names. Edited by ALLEN MAWER. (Cambridge University Press. 3s.)

THE larger of these two books is Volume 5 of the English Place Name Survey; a survey undertaken by the English Place Name Society with the approval of the British Academy to "interpret, county by county, the place names of England, and to draw from them all those conclusions historical, cultural, and linguistic which are implicit in them." The first volume was designed to be an introduction to the whole survey and was divided into two parts. The second part of Volume One is indicated above: "The Chief Elements used in English Place Names," and is an essential companion to the separate volumes.

Previous volumes have dealt with the place names of Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire, and Worcestershire. Yorkshire is to be dealt with in three separate volumes, Riding by Riding, and this one interprets the place names of the North Riding. Whereas the earlier volumes have been almost exclusively the work of the general editors of the series, this volume is almost wholly the work of Dr. A. H. Smith, of Leeds University.

The district covered in this volume ranges from the Pennine watershed on the West, the river Tees on the North (which was the natural boundary between the ancient kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira), and the Vale of York to the south. Parts of it are exceptionally fertile, it is an important agricultural region; parts are high, bleak moorland, providing pasturage for sheep; whilst the discovery of iron ore, limestone and salt workings in the extreme north have led to the development of an industrial region round Middlesborough (the population of which in 1827 was forty).

The vast region of high moorland precluded settlement at an early date, and only scattered settlements could arise at a later time. There is little evidence of the survival of a British population in this region, but the Riding underwent a Scandinavian settlement of exceptional thoroughness in the ninth and tenth centuries. Indeed the word "Riding" is of Scandinavian origin, and the division of Yorkshire into Ridings must be later than the Danish settlement of 876.

This volume is the first excursion of the Survey into Scandinavian England. The evidence of place names shows the many interesting parts played by the Danes who came to Yorkshire from East Anglia and those who came by way of Ireland.

The Vikings who first came as marauders to plunder and pillage, settled and cultivated the more fertile parts of the North and East Ridings, and left a much more marked impress on the county than the Romans or Angles. They inspired so much terror when they first appeared in Yorkshire that the Church added a new petition to its Litany: "A furore Normannorum, libera nos, Domine"—"From the fury of the Northmen, Good Lord deliver us."

The Northmen divided Yorkshire into Ridings and divided the Ridings into Wapentakes, and established a democratic form of government, with courts for the settlement of disputes and the promulgation of laws. The evidence of place names is all that is left in many cases, and in helping to put this evidence in a classified form this volume is invaluable. Its value is increased by a collection of notes on the dialect of the North Riding, and a map of the Riding showing the division of the area into Wapentakes.

Though the book is primarily for the scholar, it cannot but be of value to all who are interested in the early forms of government in these islands, and those who are interested in the early development of Christianity associated with Whitby.

A DETECTIVE.

Scoundrels and Scallywags. By TOM DIVALL, ex-Chief Inspector C.I.D. Scotland Yard. (Benn. 6s. net.)

MR. DIVALL began as a constable in the Metropolitan Police, and then became a C.I.D. detective. His book is chiefly interesting as a revelation of the steadiness with which a man can rise although hampered with a degree of naïveté hardly distinguishable from stupidity:—

"With some people crime is a disease, and with others a species of mania."

"When tried at the Old Bailey . . . he was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude, the severity of which will show the magnitude of his evil deeds."

"The constable had occasion to speak to the fellow about his beastly conduct, when, without any hesitation, the man plunged his knife into him. I think this was about the most cold-blood business I have heard of."

It will be seen that Mr. Divall's style is flat and pompous; not much of the inherent interest of his material survives the flattening process. Even when he mercifully refrains from moralizing, the narrative suffers from compression: for instance, the "beastly conduct" of the stabber is not specified, nor the words and tone of the reproving constable, so that the reader cannot form an opinion on the cold- or hot-bloodedness of the act; in this case he merely applies his intimate conviction that the author's judgments are frequently wrong. This prejudice is provoked by the self-righteous relish with which he records sentences of lashes with the cat. Every now and then the student of crime and human nature finds in his pages a story with a certain sharpness—such as that of the German governess who got five years' penal servitude for forty robberies, whose past could be traced neither here nor in Germany, and who in the dock "looked like an angel with her long, black hair hanging down her back." It is typical of Mr. Divall that he ends this story with the words "and if the scene could only have been put on canvas it would have made a picture of everlasting fame."

THE GOOD LIFE

Lifelong Education. By BASIL A. YEAXLEE, Ph.D. (Cassell. 2s. 6d.)

DR. YEAXLEE describes this unpretentious but excellent little book as "a sketch of the range and significance of the adult education movement." He knows his subject thoroughly, and writes concisely, lucidly, and with a restrained idealism that does not shirk difficulties. His early chapters, if they open no new windows, reiterate very persuasively the plea that education, which merely begins at school and should be continued throughout life, implies more than learning. He does not minimize the necessity for technical instruction; but he protests energetically against the too prevalent heresy that education should have a primarily utilitarian purpose or be judged by visible results. He argues eloquently, yet reasonably, for "the good life." Learning is valuable only insomuch as it begets understanding; and that is why, no matter how juvenile education may be improved, adult education will always be needed, since it is not until reaching mature years that we are sufficiently developed to turn knowledge into wisdom.

Even in the case of the young, direct teaching plays but a relatively small part in education. Indirect influences are none the less potent because they are less easy to assess. Dr. Yeaxlee is careful to emphasize this fact. At the same time, actual teaching may do much even for adults, though for them a too systematic training is not recommended. While decrying popular "outline" methods, and advocating the fullest possible treatment of any branch of study undertaken, Dr. Yeaxlee claims that it is the response to a subject, rather than the subject itself, that matters. The adult should begin with whatever interests him most. Not only will any subject, properly approached, lead naturally to other subjects, but, what is even more important, any subject will serve to broaden the mental horizon, to quicken the imagination, to refine and strengthen the judgment, and to enrich that capacity for living in creative fellowship with other people which should be the ideal aim of education.

While protesting against the notion that adult education began at the end of the eighteenth century, and after glancing briefly at earlier attempts, Dr. Yeaxlee presents an admirable summary of the educational movements inspired by the Industrial Revolution. The factory system, if it concentrated men in big cities and under bad conditions, at least made possible a communal realization of wrongs and needs. Thus, in political discontent, and at first with political aims, began those modern experiments in adult education that have since continued, multiplied, and broadened. Dr. Yeaxlee deals at some length with the Workers' Educational Association, the Adult Schools, and University Extension. But he surveys many lesser-known movements of yesterday and to-day, and does not confine his attention to England. His account of the Danish High Schools is specially interesting.

Dr. Yeaxlee faces frankly the dangers that beset adult education as at present carried on. He makes valuable suggestions as to how existing schemes might be improved and extended, and, incidentally, as to how far such mechanical aids as broadcasting, the cinema, and the gramophone might legitimately be used. He concludes with an appeal for more co-operation between voluntary organizations, for a livelier sense of responsibility among local educational authorities, and, above all, for greater effort from the Universities, which, with notable exceptions like those of Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol, and Nottingham, have lamentably failed to envisage their extra-mural obligations and opportunities.

A FANTASIA OF PREHISTORY

The Makers of Civilization in Race and History. By L. A. WADDELL. (Luzac. 28s.)

In this amazing, fascinating, and exasperating book, Dr. Waddell describes some stupendous "discoveries" with all their far-reaching implications. Not the least surprising of these discoveries is that which finds in the "Sumerian" seals of the Indus Valley civilization evidence that reveals Sargon of Akkad, a fairly historical prince, as a Sumerian, whose empire included not only the Mesopotamian, Cappadocian, Syrian, and Canaanitish lands normally allotted to him, but also Egypt, where he figures as a pre-dynastic Pharaoh, and father of Menes, the founder of the First Dynasty. Compared with this defiant anachronism, Dr. Waddell's further discovery that the Sumerians, Hittites, Kassites, and men of Gutium were all of "Aryan" race, Nordic ancestors of the Indo-European peoples, is comparatively easy of acceptance. For we know a good deal about Sargon and his period, but very little of the racial origins of the Sumerians and their non-Semitic contemporaries and successors. In face of these momentous claims, it is necessary to say at once that Dr. Waddell is no cheap exponent of what may be called the "Lost Tribes" school of anthropology; but is a scholar saturated in the lore of the ancient world and quite abreast of the latest archaeological discoveries, hence he is well aware that his speculations here presented will be denounced as heresies by every orthodox school of prehistory. He is not, in fact, supported by any authority on any branch of his subject, nor does he claim such support. He is his own authority. He plays a lone hand, and he plays it fairly with all his cards on the table. But as only specialists can judge the value of the cards, he is a most dangerous guide for lay readers.

The reason why Dr. Waddell seeks to subvert all the current racial and linguistic theories with regard to Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, is his discovery that the King lists in the Indian epics, the Puranas and the Mahabharata, correspond almost exactly with the King lists of the Sumerians, that, consequently, they presumably refer to the same persons, and that the inference follows—it does not of necessity follow—that the Aryan invaders of India were Sumerians. Dr. Waddell sets these Sumerian and Indian King lists in parallel columns, where the coincidences of similarity are certainly very striking; very striking, that is, to the layman. We have to bear in mind, however, that whereas Dr. Waddell announced this discovery many years

ago, the learned world that deals with such matters has coldly ignored it ; yet if authentic it must be of incalculable importance.

There is no room in a brief notice of a huge book of some seven hundred pages to follow Dr. Waddell in his further discoveries of Sumerian references in the Scandinavian Eddas and the Arthurian legends. It must suffice to say that having found the Sumerians, Hittites, Kassites, Men of Gutium, and, by the way, the Phoenicians, to be Aryan Nordics, Dr. Waddell sees these ancient peoples and their legends at the very heart of our own civilization. In this fantasia of prehistory the speculative note prevails ; it is all a wonder and a wild surmise, and we feel from time to time that had not Dr. Waddell endeavoured to prove so much he might have won the attention of the learned world to some, at least, of his conjectures. For instance, is there any reason why the Puranas, for all their fabulous content, may not also embalm history, no matter whose? A little while ago the "Iliad" was fabulous, to-day much of it is history. However, here the book is ; and for all its faults of dogmatism and rash surmise it is packed with interesting summaries of recent research beautifully illustrated ; and it has tables of contents and an index that are models of their kind.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

The Barrier. By F. E. MILLS YOUNG. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)

This is a competent and interesting novel. The racial barrier in South Africa forms part of the theme, but Miss Mills Young is always more concerned with her people, who are adequately and vigorously drawn. Grimston, a prosperous doctor, antagonizes his wife Esther by adopting Christina, a half-caste child. The ostensible motive for his action is to prove that, were the races given equal opportunities, there would be no difference between them ; but, in reality, he believes himself to be the child's father, and he is impelled by paternal and even sexual feeling. After the death of his wife, he learns that Christina is not his child, and he persuades her to marry him, and she, against her will, for she is in love with a young man of her own kind, consents. His marriage places him beyond the white pale and ruins him. In the end, having given birth to a child which, to her bitter disappointment, is quite black, Christina abandons him for her young lover. It is praiseworthy to have given Grimston, who dominates the second half of the book, as much understanding and sympathy as was given to Esther, who dominates the first. This contributes to hold the reader's interest until the end. The girl Christina is also sympathetically yet impartially portrayed. She might be modelled on Conrad's Nina Almayer. The writing is inclined to be stilted and pretentious, but it is readable.

The Clere Family : 1927-1928. By ELLA FULLER-MAITLAND and R. SPENCE BERNARD. (Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d.)

This is a novel in the form of letters. The authors have been only partly successful in overcoming the difficulty of the form, which is to differentiate the style of letters written by different people. Their distinctions depend more on the plot than on the characterization. The people, who belong to the gentry, are mildly satirized. They are peculiarly and ineffably English. Perhaps they are too English, too much like the foreigner's conception of the English, stiff prigs. They are somehow unreal, like the characters in a play. Mrs. Clere is the widowed mother of Effie, an invalid, John, a lieutenant-commander in the Navy, and Stanislas, a spoilt and rather wild young man. She cannot forgive Rose Allington, a kind of ward, for being more attractive than Effie, and also for being the penniless daughter of a woman with whom her husband was once in love. But she is punished for her pride and jealousy. John falls in love with Rose ; Stanislas marries Violet Ludd, the widow of a horse trainer, and opens a riding school ; while Rose engages herself as secretary-companion to Flora Batemann, an immensely wealthy, but plain and good-natured woman. There are three or four other correspondents : Canon Felix Armfield, Mrs. Clere's brother, trite and ponderous ; his wife Daphne, young and modern in spirit, but not unhappy with him (a good touch) ; and Captain Shaw-Mason, who falls gravely in love with Flora. Something in the nature of a mystery is introduced surrounding Flora and Violet. The pace is rather slow.

NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

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Rosa PONSELLE, soprano, gives us another very good record of Bellini's "Norma," in which she was so successful at Covent Garden. She sings the beautiful aria "Casta Diva" (12-in. record. DB1280. 8s. 6d.). Another successful debutant at Covent Garden was the German baritone, Rudolf Bockelmann ; that he has a very fine voice and knows how to use it is shown by his singing of the famous Toreador's song from "Carmen" and the Mirror song from "Tales of Hoffmann" (12-in. record. C1680. 4s. 6d.). The Westminster Choir sing a wonderful example of Byrd's music in "Exsurge Domine," and on the other side is Child's "O Bone Jesu," a good choral record (12-in. record. C1678. 4s. 6d.).

Grieg's popular sonata for piano and violin in C minor, Op. 45, is played by Rachmaninoff and Kreisler (Three 12-in. records. DB1259-61. 8s. 6d. each). The work is simple enough, and it is the kind of thing which Kreisler appears to enjoy playing. Naturally in his hands and Rachmaninoff's it is superbly played and the recording is more than usually good.

There has not hitherto been a really first-rate recording of probably the greatest of Beethoven's first eight symphonies, the seventh, in A major, Op. 92. It would however be hardly possible to improve upon the records of this work now issued, played by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Stokowski (Five 12-in. records. D1639-43. 6s. 6d. each). The extraordinary virtuosity of this orchestra has never been more evident, and the recording is as good as anything hitherto produced in orchestral records.

Another very beautiful record is Bach's "Erbarme Dich, Mein Gott," from "St. Matthew Passion," and Handel's "Dank sei Dir Herr," sung by Rosette Anday, contralto (12-in. record. D1664. 6s. 6d.).

COLUMBIA RECORDS

The best Columbia record is of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Capriccio Espagnole" played with considerable spirit by the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty (Two 12-in. records. 9716-7. 4s. 6d. each). The piece is a good example of the composer's vigorous and often meretricious brilliance. Another good record is the Trio of Masks from Puccini's "Turandot," sung by Nessi, Baracchi, and Venturini (10-in. record. D1663. 4s. 6d.).

There is a wide selection of seasonable light music. The best is perhaps that played by the Eastbourne Municipal Orchestra or Band, and includes Arensky's "Silhouettes" (9749. 4s. 6d.), Toselli's Second Serenata, and Saint-Sæns Tarantelle for flute and clarinet (9750. 4s. 6d.). There is also "Gaiety Echoes," played by Herman Finck's Orchestra (9718. 4s. 6d.), and songs from the Musical Comedy "New Moon," sung by Evelyn Laye, Howett Worster, and chorus (9751 and 9752. 4s. 6d. each).

By recording Beethoven's Quartet in A major (Op. 18, No. 5), Columbia have made it possible for the gramophonist to possess all the Beethoven Quartets, adequately played and recorded. It is rather strange that this simple and charming quartet should be the last to be recorded. It is played very well by the Capet String Quartet (Four 10-in. records. D1659-62. 4s. 6d. each). It is essential that we should now be given the Grosse Fugue, which was originally the finale of the Quartet in B flat.



BOOKS

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THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH

In the early days of broadcasting, different pronunciations of certain English words were used by individual announcers. To overcome this difficulty the B.B.C. sought the advice of an expert committee presided over by Mr. Robert Bridges, the Poet Laureate. The result of this committee's work has now been reissued in the form of a Tract of the Society for Pure English which Mr. Bridges has himself edited, after receiving the criticism of Lord Balfour, Lord Grey of Fallodon and others upon its decisions. This Tract, "THE B.B.C.'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRONOUNCING DOUBTFUL WORDS," is published by the Oxford University Press, 3/6 net. All interested in the work of the Society for Pure English may become members and receive its publications for one year by sending 10/- to the Secretary, S.P.E., Clarendon Press, Oxford.

SOCIETY FOR PURE ENGLISH

AUCTION BRIDGE

BY CALIBAN.

A BRIDGE PLAYER'S STATISTICS (II.)

IN my article last week I reproduced, in tabular form, Trinculo's summary of the results of three hundred consecutive rubbers. The comments on this table which suggest themselves are as follows:—

(1) Trinculo's "expectation" (which he communicated to me before any of these rubbers were played)—that he would win, on an average, fifty-seven out of a hundred—proved to be almost comically accurate. He won, in fact, 169 out of three hundred, or 56.3 per cent. If every player learnt to assess his capacities as accurately as this, we should not hear so much about "luck."

(2) There were several "runs" of good and bad luck experienced during the course of these rubbers. Thus, Trinculo went off with a "bang," winning forty-three out of his first seventy, and standing, at the end of them, 7,391 points to the good—an average of over one hundred points per rubber. This was obviously too good to last. By contrast, he lost thirty-two rubbers out of sixty (between the 211th and 270th), and was 5,533 points down on the series, or an average of over ninety points per rubber. Players who do not record, and review, their results taken as a whole are apt to draw quite misleading conclusions from runs of luck such as these.

(3) The longest sequence of winning rubbers was eight (three times); the longest sequence of losing rubbers, six.

(4) The distribution of rubbers won and lost according to their size is extremely interesting. It is as follows:—

SIZE OF RUBBER.	RUBBERS WON.		RUBBERS LOST.	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
800 AND OVER	7	4.1	9	6.9
700-799	7	4.1	7	5.3
600-699	9	5.3	6	4.6
500-599	16	9.5	14	10.7
450-499	15	8.9	14	10.7
TOTAL 450 and over	54	31.9	50	38.2
400-449	16	9.5	12	9.1
350-399	23	13.6	11	8.4
300-349	20	11.8	14	10.7
200-299	21	12.4	17	13.0
100-199	20	11.8	13	9.9
Under 100	15	8.9	14	10.7
TOTAL under 450	115	68.1	81	61.8
TOTAL ..	169	100.0	131	100.0

This table throws a certain amount of light on Trinculo's methods; it shows that the rubbers he loses are substantially larger, on the average, than the rubbers he wins. Of the three hundred rubbers here analyzed, his winning rubbers averaged 383 points; his losing rubbers 401 points. What is the explanation? It is, I think, fairly obvious: that Trinculo plays a more dogged *defensive* game than do most of those at his table. "Every call I make," he tells me, "is based on a calculation of chances; if my expectation of loss, on a call made to save the rubber, is less than my expectation of loss if I don't make it, then it pays me, in the long run, to go ahead. I lose, I admit, a fair proportion of good-sized rubbers—but look at all the rubbers I save." His statistics, I think, bear out his contention that his policy is a sound one. Confirmation of this explanation is to be found in the fact that, of the rubbers won by Trinculo, twenty-three were rubbers of 350 to 400 points, whereas *less than half that number* of such rubbers were lost. Now these, in the main, are the rubbers, won, perhaps, in a couple of hands or so, which indifferent players allow to go by default—because they lack either the courage to take risks, or the ability to evaluate them. Out of three hundred rubbers, Trinculo won thirty-eight more than he lost, and, as he rightly says, 38 times 250 is 9,500 points; and a surplus of 9,500 points gives one plenty of margin for flag-flying.

July 20, 1929

THE NATION & ATHENÆUM

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

NEW YORK—PRUDENTIAL INVESTORS—"COMMUNICATIONS" SHARES

PERHAPS, after all, the City's dream will be realized—Federal Reserve bankers in America restored to calm and sanity, New York rediscount rate reduced, money flowing back from stock market loans into bonds, balances transferred from New York to London. The bankers have said nothing, but the feeling is getting stronger that the Federal Reserve policy of dear money is being reversed. Why not, when there is a 70 per cent. reserve to-day as against a 40 per cent. reserve in 1920? The New York correspondent of the *ECONOMIST* has cabled that the struggle between the Federal Reserve Banks and the Reserve Board has ended in a draw—the Banks relinquishing their applications to be allowed to advance rates and the Board its claims to force direct action on the Banks. The New York Stock Exchange, in any case, has decided on another burst of optimism in the belief that money will be cheaper and that business is good, in spite of the fall in wheat prices and the State relief of the farmers. Utilities and railroads are in the van of this "bull" movement. For example, North American, a public utility common stock which we have recommended in *THE NATION* from about 50 upwards, is now quoted at 154½ as against 100 only three months ago. This is the Stock which, receiving 10 per cent. stock dividends, will always return a potential yield of 10 per cent. or more as long as there is a rising market. The reverse process is too awful to contemplate, but Mr. Sidney Mitchell, of the Electric Bond and Share Company, stated at dinner (a dry one) only three weeks ago that he considered North American the one unquestionably cheap public utility stock in the market.

* * * *

We do not advise speculators on this side to gamble in individual stocks in a New York "bull" movement, but there is a good deal to be said for an investment in one of the American trust companies which have specialized in utilities. We referred to Electric Shareholdings in *THE NATION* of June 22nd., a company which has a profit of some millions on its utility holdings. Then there is Prudential Investors Incorporated. This trust was formed in January this year and issued 750,000 shares at about \$26 per share. At the beginning of June the Company had 55 per cent. of its funds invested in stocks, and 45 per cent. in the call loan market earning 8 per cent. or more. Of the stocks two-thirds were invested in America, and among the holdings were North American, American Gas and Electric, American Power and Light, Electric Bond and Share and General Electric. At the end of four months the Company had gained in dividends, interest, and capital appreciation over \$1,000,000 on a paid-up capital of \$18,750,000. No individual British speculator could expect to better in New York the results achieved by an expert New York management. Prudential Investors shares are now quoted at \$28.

* * * *

We may now compare the market prices of large "Communications" combines in Great Britain and the United States. Cables and Wireless Ltd., on the basis of a full exchange of its shares for the ordinary stocks of the Eastern Cable group and the ordinary and participating shares of Marconi (only a small percentage of shareholders stood out of the merger) would have a capital of £53,700,000. Its earnings are expected in the market to rise (not immediately) to £3,365,000 a year. After satisfying the 5½ per cent. preference dividends on the "A" ordinary stock, the "B" ordinary stock on this basis would earn 5.35 per cent. Dealings in the market this week have been around 89 for the "A" ordinary stock and 94 for the "B." In other words, the "B" stock is selling at 18 times its estimated *potential* earnings. On the other hand, American Telephone and Telegraph, which owns the Bell system in the United States and the Western Electric Company (a very profitable manufacturing busi-

ness) and has a capital of \$1,313,366,700, is selling at 249½—which is only twenty times the *actual* 1928 net earnings of \$12.11 per share, even after the recent rise in American utility stocks. It may safely be deduced that American Telephone and Telegraph is a better purchase than Cables and Wireless "B" ordinary stock. Incidentally, the convertible bonds of American Telephone and Telegraph are a cheaper purchase than the stock. Selling around 140 per cent. these bonds are convertible from January 1st, 1930, at the rate of \$100 bond plus \$80 cash for one share of common stock. American Telephone and Telegraph also compares favourably with International Telephone and Telegraph, the Company which, under the direction of Colonel Sosthenes Behn, has been rapidly developing its telegraph business outside America, amalgamating with the Mackay system in 1928, and in December last buying the British out of the United River Plate Telephone in South America. At 112, International Telephone is selling at thirty-three times its 1928 net earnings of \$8.40 per share.

* * * *

There can be no reason but the official love of mystery why the number of £1 shareholders of Marconi who stood out of the Cables and Wireless merger should not be published. The £1 Marconi shareholder who assented received the same amount of "A" and "B" ordinary stock in Cables and Wireless (£205 8s. and £150 5s. respectively per 100 shares) as the 10s. Marconi shareholder, but £131 10s. of the 5½ per cent. preference stock against £81 10s.). At the market prices of 95, 89, and 95 for the three Cables and Wireless stocks, £1 Marconi shareholders will have received £4 10s. worth of Cables and Wireless stock and the 10s. Marconi shareholder £4 0s. 3d. worth per share held. The Marconi £1 shareholder has not done so badly, but those who have remained out of the merger will possibly do better. The Cable stockholder received in Cables and Wireless :

£165 of 5½ preference stock now valued at	£156 15 0
£108 18s. of 7½ "A" ordinary stock now valued at	£96 18 6
£26 of "B" ordinary stock now valued at	£24 14 0

which come to £278 7s. 6d. Seeing that the cable stocks fell during last year as low as 135 before the announcement of the merger with Marconi, the cable stockholders should be eternally grateful for the wisdom of their directors. The most attractive stock of Cables and Wireless from the investment point of view is the 5½ per cent. preference stock which at 95 yields £5 17s. per cent.

* * * *

Control of the world's raw materials is always intriguing the Stock Exchange. It is so much easier to estimate producers' profits than manufacturers' or traders'. In London this week two lots of world producers are sitting in secret session—oil and tin. A Committee representative of the American Petroleum Export Association is conferring with Sir Henri Deterding and Sir John Cadman. The Americans want to put up the price of petrol regardless of the over-production of crude oil in the United States. The tin producers of the British Empire, on the other hand, are unable to move the price of tin up or down, but they have formed at last a Producers' Association, and are considering the ways and means of preventing the extreme fluctuations in the price of tin and of encouraging consumption. As there is no longer any restriction of oil output in America, it would be a piece of folly to advance the price of petrol, which would only lead to worse over-production. Our sympathies therefore lie with the British tin producers who, controlling only 50 per cent. of the world's output can do little harm by associating together. But we must confess that if the American Petroleum Association does put up the export price of petrol, and Sir Henri Deterding acquiesces, we shall regard Royal Dutch or Shell Transport shares as a scandalously attractive purchase for the short view.

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